

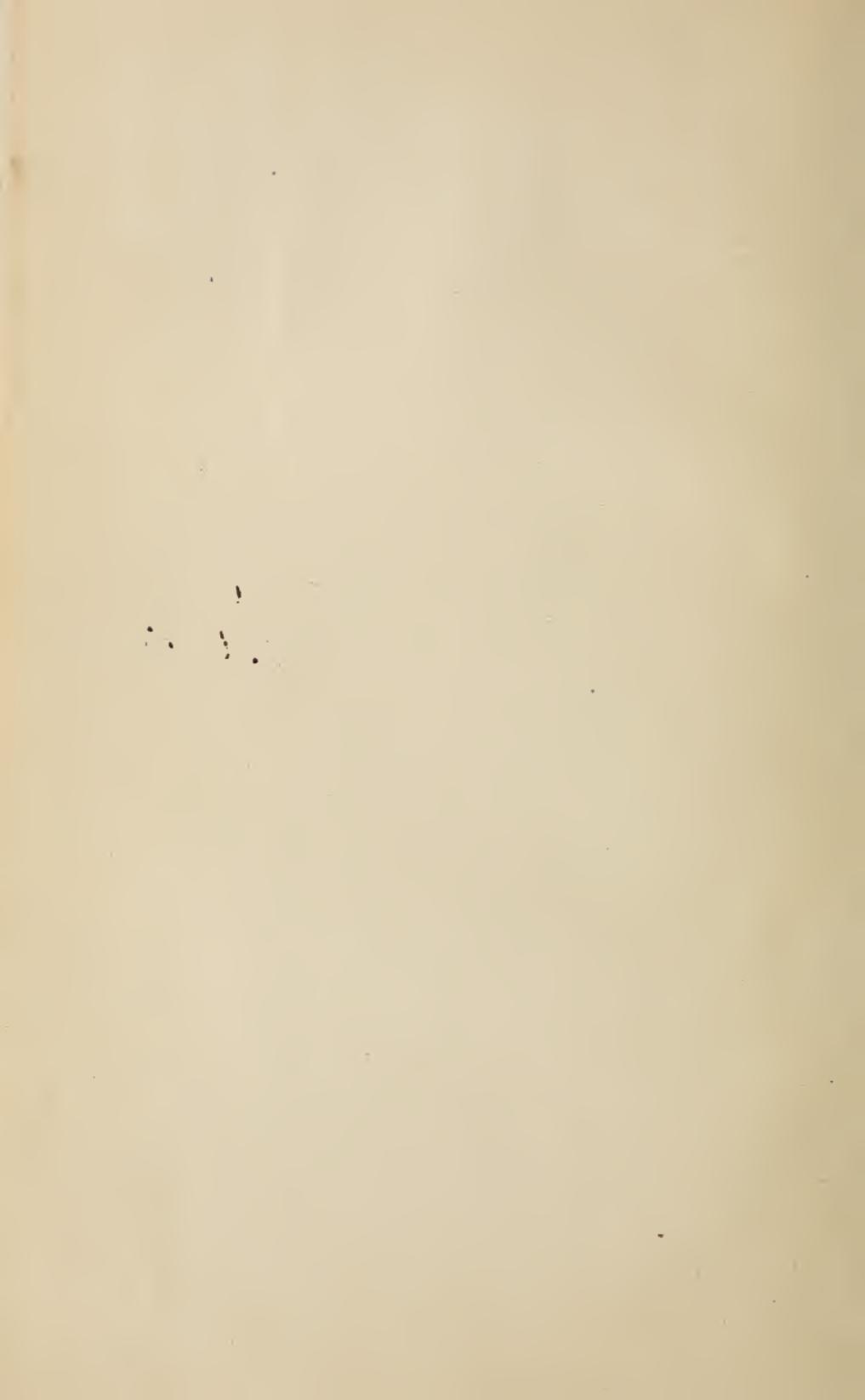
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NEW YORK AND LONDON
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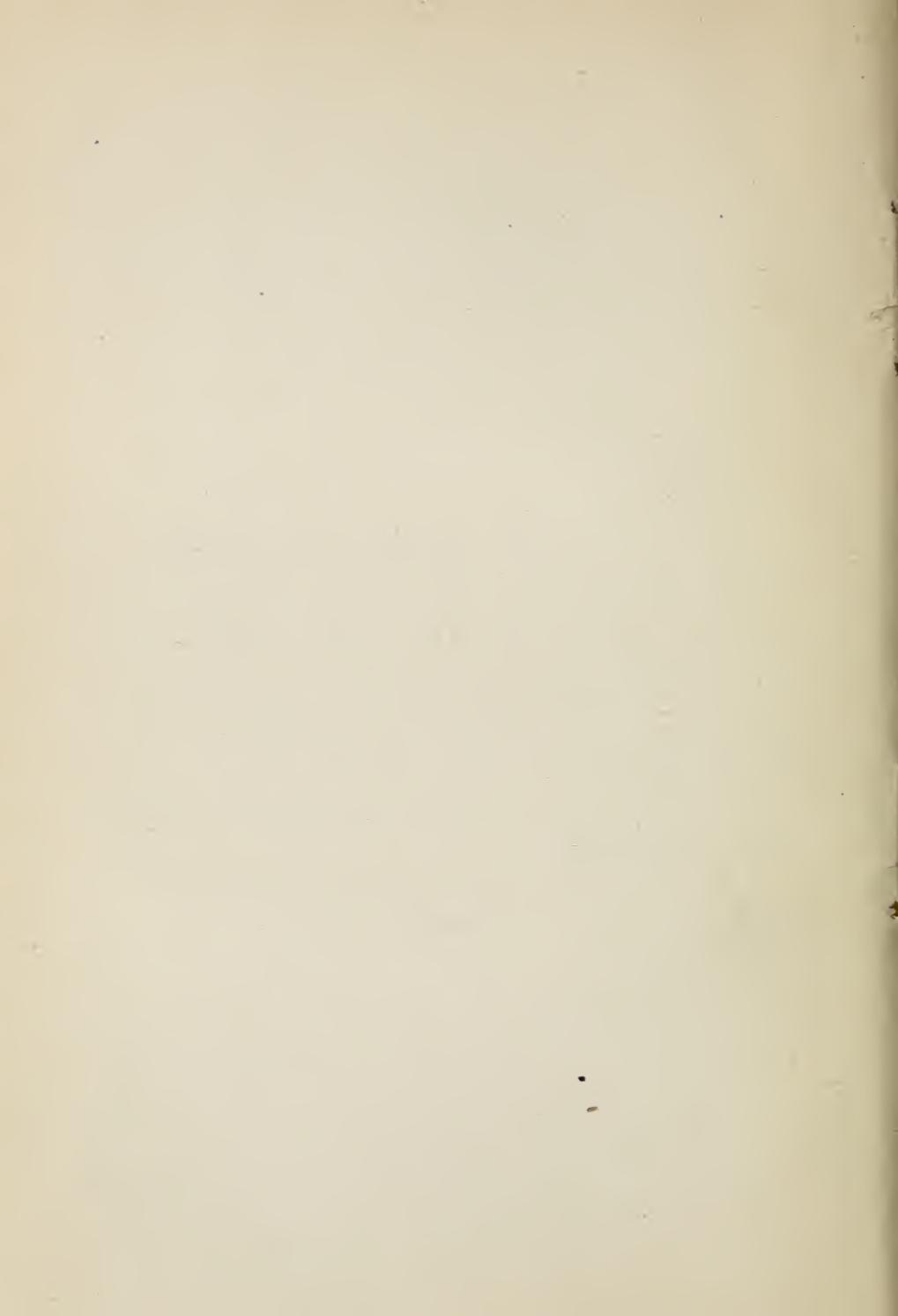
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“Educate him if you wish him to feel his degradation; educate him if you wish to stimulate his craving for what he must never enjoy; educate him if you would imitate the barbarity of that Celtic tyrant who fed his prisoners on salted food until they eagerly called for drink, and then let down an empty cup into the dungeon and left them to die of thirst.”—Macaulay.

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HAROLD.

CHAPTER I.

“ Nor think them right :
But hold it thus a prophecy,
Who frees the slave, enslaves the free.”

—COLERIDGE.

LONDON. Hot. Midday. Piccadilly and Regent Street bustle with vehicles and pedestrians.

Brummels' Lane is situate precisely in the heart of the British metropolis. It is a little thoroughfare that looks invitingly cool, but so unconscionably obscure that, apart from its denizens, it is doubtful whether Brummels' Lane is ever penetrated save by an occasional cabman and certain sad-eyed individuals not unremotely connected with tailors' bills.

Click. Clack. A carriage turns the corner of Westumberland Street. The hoofs of the horses make a fine metallic echo on the cobble-stones. An open carriage, and—shades of the fascinating Beau himself!—a coronet emblazoned on the panels.

Two persons are seated in this irreproachable equipage, who appear, upon further inspection, to extract an enormous amount of interest from their surroundings as they are being whirled along.

Carriage suddenly stopping, footman gets down and

scrutinizes the numbers of the various dwellings composing the eastern extremity of Brummels' Lane.

“ Twenty-nine ?”

“ Ah ! he has found it,” murmurs my lady.

“ Pope’s Inn ?” Correct.

“ Charles !”

“ Yes, your ladyship ?”

“ Ring and ask the porter if Mr. Inigo Bright is at home.”

Flunkey obeys orders grimly. One—two—three minutes elapse. Odd—very. No porter appears. Wait an hour, a day, a month, a year ; you will be singularly adroit if you meet with better success. Pope’s Inn is guiltless of porters.

Five minutes. Manifest impatience in region of carriage.

“ Charles !”

“ Yes, your ladyship ?”

“ Ascend the stairs and find out Mr. Bright’s chambers. Knock and inform his servant—he has a servant, hasn’t he, dear—*What !* Charles, knock and inform Mr. Bright that Lord Middleton and Lady May Dubersly are below and would be delighted if he could join them.”

Footman, with a respectful nod, takes himself off.

“ Do you think the drive has done you good, Henry ?” continues the fair speaker. “ The air here is very cool.”

The other occupant of the carriage permits a wan sort of smile to suffuse his features. He moves his head forward slightly, and reaching for his companion’s disengaged hand, kisses it.

" You are a good girl, May," he says, at length. " I don't deserve it. Yes, of course I feel much better, dear. I do hope Bright can spend the day with us. But perhaps, after all, he is out of town."

Here the footman returns and delivers his message formally, after the manner of flunkies to the nobility. Compliments of gentleman upstairs ; disliked to keep his friends waiting a single minute. Furthermore, would be ready to enter the carriage, punctually, in *five*, during which delay gentleman upstairs trusted his lordship would permit his lordship's coachman to drive them round into the square, by way of diversion.

(" A cool one—damned if 'e ain't," vigorously asseverated his lordship's footman, an hour or so later. " Found 'im drinking coffee in bed an' perusink the *Times*. 'E made me 'and 'im 'is trousers and arsked me — arsked *me*, partickerly polite, if I wouldn't black 'is boots for 'im. Earls in garrets ! damn my eyes !")

In five minutes the carriage has returned, and a young gentleman who has been waiting on the pavement is taken up. The ceremony is attended with a warmth of salutation edifying, in the extreme, to an outsider. That these two young men are positively attached to each other is evident before the equipage has rattled out of Brummels' Lane into the light and sultriness of Westumberland Street. The newcomer has a look of distinction, being thin, pale, broad-chested, with a fibrous stock of sable hair. Lady May Dubersly has already addressed him as MR. INIGO BRIGHT.

“ I was sorry you didn’t come yesterday,” begins his lordship.

“ I didn’t leave the *Times* office once in twenty-eight hours,” explains the other.

“ Really, old fellow, I am delighted to hear you are so *épris* with your work. Is anything up?”

“ Anything, my dear Henry? Have you read your newspaper to-day?”

“ No; first, because I was not in the mood, and because Sis was too busy dressing to read it to me. But tell me, what has happened?”

“ Everything. The Americans have decided to make war in earnest.”

“ Make war in earnest!” interrupts Lady May. “ Mr. Bright, you really ought to be ashamed to talk in that way. It is wicked.”

“ In earnest! How?”

“ President Lincoln having decided to free the slaves, signed a proclamation to that effect yesterday.”

There was silence for a moment.

“ A mistake—a blunder!” muttered the invalid.

“ I beg your pardon, Henry?” says Inigo Bright.

“ A monumental blunder,” repeats the young aristocrat, with a tinge of bitterness in his voice and look.

“ Dear, dear!” breaks in Lady May with a distressing *moue*, “ will you two never get weary discussing theories and abstracts?”

“ Who is discussing theories and abstracts?” says her brother, smiling.

“ Oh, well, whatever you call it. Politics, politics, politics.”

“ It’s a relief from commonplaces about the weather

and the crops certainly,"' says Henry Middleton, changing front good-humoredly.

"Tut, tut, dear! You know argument always leaves you weak."

"A doctor's fallacy," suggests Inigo Bright. "Argument is good for your worthy brother's complaint. It occupies his mind and keeps him from becoming hypochondriacal."

"You are such an oracle, Mr. Bright."

"Not a complete one, I'm afraid," returns Mr. Bright, modestly. "For instance, I would not like to say whether the new crinoline Mrs. Cholmondeley brought out last month will secure vogue this fall."

"Well, of all—!" exclaims Lady May, giving vent to a hearty laugh. "Perhaps you can tell me how long we are to wear chignons and—and whether we can lay aside our hoops next winter or not?"

* * * * *

And as they talk the coachman suddenly pulls up his horses before Lord Middleton's London house in Caermarthen Square.

CHAPTER II.

“A clever dog on his wits.”—SCOTT.

INIGO BRIGHT was the rising hope of that small and select politico-literary circle—the *cognoscenti* of London. He had already been marked for distinction. He was, to be more precise, twenty-six and a journalist. Naturally the mass of Londoners knew nothing of the man, but by his own sect Bright was regarded with a species of awe, curiosity, and admiration, to which, there is but little doubt, his extreme youth weightily contributed. Inigo Bright was no mere genius, at least no genius in fancy. What he knew, he knew, as the saying goes, and it would be hard to say which his associates most envied, his luck in being able to fasten upon knowledge or his capacity, having secured it, of retaining and arranging it. His broad familiarity with foreign affairs, his precocious foresight where political issues were concerned, his brilliant style, his prodigious capacity for work, his talent for directorship—these were the young man’s virtues. As for his vices—none knew; he kept himself in the background too much. Perhaps they were his vices, too; he kept himself in the background too much, and yet not enough to be exempt from charges grounded in malice.

“Cynic,” said the rising young Flabbershare of the *Morning Post*.

Albeit half of his colleagues were a little afraid of him.

“ Morbid recluse,” observed the sub-editor of the *Telegraph*.

“ Egotist,” said another.

Brutus of the *Critic* merely tapped his temples significantly.

* * * * *

“ He is a very great and wonderful man !”

Ha ! It was little Coleridge Wrexham who spake. Coleridge is only a Parliamentary reporter, you know, but ambitious. He is an admirist, perhaps by temperament.

“ They said all that demned rot of young Pitt and young Napoleon,” he added.

Evidently little Coleridge is a person of perspicacity.

These comments at the Town Club one evening in January.

CHAPTER III.

“It is a prodigious task to lift an individual or a class from barbarism to enlightenment and keep him there. The tendency is to relapse.”—HON. SENATOR INGALLS.

LORD MIDDLETON was lunching in Devonshire a couple of weeks after the conversation with which the present volume opens. Thither, to his country-seat, he had dragged off Bright, away from the latter’s arduous London work, to give him, as he expressed it, a “morsel of fresh air” and a “bit of landscape recreation.”

During the first short chats here of the two college friends Lady May Dubersly, his lordship’s sister, was invariably present. Now, no one, it is certain, could be more agreeable than the London journalist when he wished to be. In spite of his pallor and ascetic appearance, he never showed the versatility or the rare talents he possessed to better effect than in the presence of women. A smile he had that was singularly winning. Deficient in what is strictly called humor, Inigo Bright, on the other hand, never permitted himself to be hopelessly erudite in his talk. It was a way he had as a young man of never letting his auditors know from his words to what depth, intensity, and completeness he was master of the subject in hand.

Lord Middleton was a generous and rather witty

young nobleman, who often for weeks at a time never knew a moment's release from physical pain, and whose chief manner of spending the immense wealth derived from his estates was upon his doctors. To their shame be it said, they never fully succeeded in finding out what was the matter with him.

Lord Middleton and Bright tried at first to keep their pet theme of politics out of their talk, the one because he feared it would not interest the young lady, and his lordship, perhaps, because he was afraid he could never, from inherent instinct, agree with his brilliant friend. To-day the three had lunch spread for them on the lawn by the side of a miniature lake, and Lord Middleton told some funny stories he had heard about the Congo, and asked Bright if they were true. It was a warm, delicious afternoon, and Lady May was presently called to the house by a visit from an adjacent nobleman's lady.

“Pardon me, my dear friend,” broke in Middleton, suddenly, “but I think I have chanced upon a great secret of yours. It came out in our talk at Caermarthen Square the other day. The idea that it really is a secret and one you don't care to confide in me haunts me like a troop of Oxford creditors.”

“Indeed,” said his comrade, shortly.

“Now, my dear fellow, don't be angry; but you alluded to an experiment in our talk with that American the other day—an experiment you should like to see made with regard to the blackamoor race in general. Confess that it is your intention, at least your desire to make that experiment yourself.”

The pale brow of Inigo Bright flushed with sudden

animation. It was with difficulty that he restrained an impulsive movement.

"It has been my hope for years," he said at length, very quietly.

"It would be a great anthropological experiment of course," pursued Lord Henry. "It would prove, I suppose, whether or not a savage is capable of genuine refinement; whether the 'thoughts of man are widened with the process of the suns,' or—let us hunt for an epigram—whether the cannibal can bound in a single span into the chair of the savant."

The other said nothing. Lady May returned presently, and this highly interesting discussion wandered off momentarily into new fields.

"See here, Inigo," the young nobleman took occasion to say the next day, apropos of nothing, "why can't we make such an experiment? Ha, ha! I know it sounds rather abrupt, but the fact is, I've been thinking about it all night. I say we, not because the credit of the thing, if there is any in the end, would belong to me or indeed not wholly to you, but because the enterprise would take money, and that at least I've got."

"Suppose," pursued his lordship, "we were to get a little brat of a blackamoor and give him all the advantages of Stuart Mill and Lord Chesterfield combined. That is the way I understand the idea. Is it not? We are young and, by Jove! the thing *is* practicable. Eh, Inigo? Why don't you answer?" he added, almost vehemently.

In truth, his companion had remained perfectly still for a full minute, looking straight ahead into the

shadow of the great hedges which divided the estate. It was not hard to divine his feelings. In a word, this was the pet project of his youth. To yield it up even to his best friend staggered him for the moment.

In the first tumult of his thought, it seemed to him as if he were about to relinquish a prize that he had picked up as he roamed, thinking and dreaming, over the better part of two hemispheres. But, then, now that his London work had been opened to him, was it not impracticable, and did it not, besides, lose half its interest alongside of the greater task he had already set himself. Again, was the whole idea merely an amusement, an interesting diversion, this uprooting of a being of an opposite clime and transporting him as a botanist would an exotic ?

“ I fancy I looked at the experiment a little too seriously,” he said to himself. “ *Besides, I can’t afford to ride hobbies now!*”

“ Do you think it would interest you, this madman’s caprice ?” he asked aloud—“ that is, enough to make the requisite sacrifices ?”

“ What sacrifices ?” asked his friend, lightly—“ pecuniary, moral, or intellectual ?”

“ Pecuniary, of course. Some money is needed to ‘ gild the straitened forehead of the fool ;’ a good deal ought to be necessary to idealize the brute.”

“ Yes ; very often it is a golden millstone about a man’s neck to stifle ambition and drag down Promise from her temple,” said Lord Middleton, poetically ; “ but at present I am in need of amusement. If I get no worse for the next few years it will afford me

a stimulus. You see, I shall make it my hobby. I doubt, though, to be thoroughly frank, whether I shall get any intellectual pleasure out of it. Say, if you like, that I am wholly impelled by a woman's curiosity. Let me send for Holland, and we will talk it all over. Eh ? Shall we ?"

* * * * *

"Gad ! it's all like a story out of the 'Arabian Nights,'" said Lord Middleton, a few nights later on his pillow. "I say, Taylor, Taylor!"

Taylor was a brown-haired young man of starched aspect and mild demeanor, who continually attended the noble invalid. He rose sleepily up from a lounge at the other end of the apartment.

"Yes, your lordship," he said, clearing his throat.

"Was it Christopher Sly, the tinker, or—or—"

"Hodges, the grocer," suggested the valet, respectfully.

"Tut, tut ! No. I mean the person in the book who is like INIGO BRIGHT's EXPERIMENT—the—"

"Oh, yes," said Taylor, intelligently. "The—"

"Taylor," observed his lordship, slowly and with emphasis, "you are a distinct ass."

This was quite a new appellation. The valet pondered over it. Lord Middleton slept.

CHAPTER IV.

“O fit, my lord, fit, humbly fit !”

—MARLOWE.

THERE lived, at this time, in a London suburb, a little, old solicitor who had once held the honorable post of confidential secretary and legal adviser to the late Arthur Dubersly, Marquis of Middleton, during that distinguished gentleman’s Parliamentary career. He had ever since received a retainer from the heir.

But it is still a proverb that the Duberslys never went into the courts, and it followed that the present office of legal adviser was an easy tenure.

John Holland, the family solicitor, was a man of combined humility, high sagacity, and unquestioned probity. Being a bachelor, the old baronet used to say that nothing prevented his retainer’s rise in the world but his extreme honesty and insufferable contentment. He looked sixty-five, but was nearly ten years younger, in point of fact. Holland was neither crabbed nor dried in countenance ; his face was that of a wall, especially in repose, which is tantamount to saying always. His mind and body were vigorous. His heart was as guileless as a child’s.

This was the man whom the nobleman and the rising journalist agreed upon as their missionary to

the Dark Continent. The story of that mission, shedding so great a light as it does upon the motives and moral of this book, is best made known to the world in the garrulous barrister's own words, recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

JOHN HOLLAND'S NARRATIVE.

“ Come on, you thick-lipped brat, I'll bear you hence,
For it is you that puts us to our shifts.”

—*Titus Andronicus.*

ACCORDING to the instructions given me by your lordship, I shall now endeavor to set forth an exact account of all that transpired during my recent extraordinary mission to Senegambia, up to my return. I may preface my story by observing that such a mission at my time of life was a great surprise to me, and that although I appeared tranquil to my friends, my heart beat like a boy's at the prospect of adventure.

I had decided to sail on the 12th of September, having made arrangements with the captain of a vessel bound for Sierra Leone and Cape Town to stop at Bissagos, islands some three hundred miles north along the coast, and from whence I was assured I could procure a boat for the mainland. On the 7th I gave notice to my landlady that I should, in all probability, vacate my rooms for several months, in consequence of an urgent call which I had just then received. She seemed much shocked, for your lordship must know I have been a steady occupant of my lodgings at Hammersmith for nearly nineteen years. Pre-

vious to that I had resided in a street in Westminster with a German family, the head of which cut his throat one morning, owing to a failure of the hop harvest. Herr Spitz's wife was a pleasant little woman. I never shall forget her entrance into my chamber, shortly after the tragedy, to inform me of it. She said her husband had long been out of his right mind, but seemed to be chiefly fearful as to whether I would continue to lodge with her after what had transpired. I was much shocked, and assured her it would not make the slightest difference, which, indeed, I did not think it would at the time. But I had not reckoned with my friends. My landlady was good-looking, of a tidy and affectionate nature, and had a little boy. The barristers at court began to laugh ; even the judge winked at me upon occasions when asking after my health. Finally, some one saluted me in open court as Pickwick, and inquired after the health of Mrs. Bardell. "Remember me to Mrs. B.," said the wag, "and don't forget the little boy !" Whereupon the whole bar was convulsed with laughter, and I determined to leave my lodgings and seek others elsewhere.

I was just as fortunate in my new location, besides being away from the smoke and noise of the city. Mrs. Hope Walworth, my new landlady, did everything possible to render my surroundings comfortable, and I in turn took great interest in the education and welfare of her two daughters. She also was a widow, who had lost her husband after a wedded life lasting less than three years, and she ever continued inconsolable. She never appeared to worry over trivialities, and has constantly carried herself, dur-

ing the nineteen years I have known her, as though a great weight lay at her heart ; which, indeed, it did without doubt, for I am quite sure she loved her husband extremely.

As I have already said, before commencing to digress, Mrs. Walworth seemed much shocked at the news. She was afraid that I really intended to leave her, being dissatisfied, and that this excuse of mine served merely to delay and alleviate the announcement. I hastened, therefore, to inform her that I had resolved, no matter how long my absence might be protracted, to continue my usual monthly stipend of rent, and desired that she would see fit to have my lodgings temporarily occupied against my return. This was likewise in accordance with your lordship's suggestion. She was quite touched, and with much consideration refrained from questioning concerning the motives or destination of my journey. Her daughters, Maud and Constance, were outwardly much more affected, and came down to supper in tears. The other lodger, a Mr. Routledge, a musician of no mean ability, and who had resided there over seven years, was also much distressed to see me go. I told him I should be back before he had begun to miss the games of whist with which we were accustomed to regale ourselves on winter evenings with the ladies. He grasped my hand and warmly replied that he hoped I would. A gloom appeared to rest upon the entire household for the remainder of the evening.

I then began to realize for the first time the consequence of the trust your lordship had imposed

upon me. As a boy I had yearned to travel to distant countries and see strange faces. I seized upon the law because my father intended me for the cloth, but I well knew that I was never intended by nature, either in temperament or capacity, for a barrister's life. During the twelve years I served your father, the late Lord Middleton at Dubersly, my affection for his person (and which I still cherish toward his memory) alone suppressed those longings—to which I was often subject—to quit England for a time and seek a change of scene and contingent adventure in foreign lands. Although I am now in my fifty-eighth year, I had never thoroughly extinguished this feeling of unrest and desire for danger. I was gifted at my birth, I am now quite confident, with a certain amount of bravery or intrepidity, as you may call it, which would have best exhibited itself in a military career. As it was, I had never been blessed or afflicted with a single opportunity to display either of these natural gifts. Whether my outward temper has been too placid and my disposition to anger so slight, I know not, but never in my whole life had I laid hands violently on a fellow-being. Neither bully, brawler, nor midnight assassin has ever crossed my path. Burglars and sneak thieves have avoided me and my environments as they would the plague. No runaway horse or mad dog had ever called into requisition those powers which had been latent within me during a whole lifetime. My existence, indeed, was a monotone, none the less so (I am conscious of apparent ingratitude in saying this) because I have been physically comfortable and free to all avenues of harmless

pleasure and recreation. Millions might have envied my lot ; as for me, I only know I chafed internally as I saw the years slip by, one by one, and old age threatening to crown a life void of a single stirring passage.

Judge, then, and blame me if I seized tenaciously upon this remarkable opportunity your lordship saw fit to place in my hands, and refused to permit emotion of any kind access to my breast. They knew me so well, that none endeavored to elicit information which they perceived I was averse to volunteer. Once or twice, while in bed, I considered strongly my original resolve to take no companion with me, and endeavored to invent and multiply dangers which the mission would entail, and to face which alone would not only be imprudent, but which might endanger the success of the enterprise. This latter consideration, however, was the only one I entertained for a moment. Even had I known of a young man I could trust to silence, I would not have robbed myself of a single iota of peril by any such encumbrance.

I will pass over any further incidents of my departure, and come at once to my stepping aboard the merchant brig *Queen Vic*, off Southampton, on the 12th of September. My luggage was light, everything I needed or fancied I should need being compactly arranged in a single valise. The sum of five hundred sovereigns in gold and bank-notes lay in a tin box at the bottom. The captain of the brig informed me that I would reach my island easily in five weeks, perhaps in four, with good winds and by skirting the coast. I carried the fine map you gave me constantly in the pocket of my greatcoat, except when I was engaged in study-

ing or exhibiting it to the crew, which, indeed, was not seldom. The captain of the brig had never seen so fine a map, and when I told him there was but one other *Africa* like it, and that in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society, he appeared highly interested. He related to me many anecdotes of his voyages, which formerly lay between Liverpool and Rio de Janeiro. He had only within the past six years been plying the trade of his company at African ports. The great difficulty, he explained, was in obtaining a crew for such a voyage.

“ Sailors, as a rule,” said he, “ like to enjoy themselves ashore, and vessels that stop at big cities, where a spree can be obtained, are most in demand. At Sierra Leone, after my first passage, the crew got mutinous, and swore they would never move the ship toward home; but when they saw that the sailors of a Portuguese and an English brig were ready to desert for my offer of double pay, they only swore they would never ship out from England again.”

When we arrived at the fortieth latitude it grew perceptibly warmer, and off Lisbon I discarded my greatcoat. I was fearful lest I should be disappointed of a storm at sea, about which I had heard much. But just as we had sighted the Madeira Islands a terrific gale arose, which took the brig many miles farther out to sea, but in a southerly direction, so our course was but little delayed. The brig touched at the island of Teneriffe for water, and on September 28th continued on to the Bissagos. The captain told me a story of his ship having been attacked and the crew nearly killed by natives. The Zulus, he observed, and, in

fact, all the blacks he had ever encountered, were the most ferocious in the world ; but that he had observed that they had one redeeming trait, that of being "open to sense." All other savages, in his opinion, were simply madmen, without a single lucid interval. He had observed in all his dealings with the blacks that they were readily excited to laughter, that they were not sullen, like the Malay, or treacherous, like the American savage. I asked him what he traded for his ivory, and he said gold. Barter was more profitable, but there was much more risk attached to it, so the major profits passed through the hands of the English settlers of the country, who were well known as mediums of exchange by the natives of the far inland.

On the 18th of October the *Queen Vic* stood in sight of one of the Bissagos, and at about three in the afternoon I bid the captain farewell, with the understanding that I was to undertake my return passage when the brig should touch at the same island—*i.e.*, about the 15th of November, against which time I reckoned to have fulfilled my mission, with a week to spare. Two of the crew rowed me in a small boat to the island, and summoning an interpreter among the handful of natives assembled on the beach, wished me good luck and left me.

I observed that the island was long and narrow, the greater part covered with a thick shrub underbrush, the rest being sand. A few clumps of palms grew here and there, to relieve the effect of sameness both in color and in height of foliage. I experienced no difficulty in making my plans known to the natives,

whom I found were partially civilized, but not so much so but that they were ready to backslide into barbarism upon slight provocation, as I have since witnessed. The fact of my landing upon Morai Island was, as your lordship is aware, the unwillingness of the captain of the brig to touch at any point on the mainland north of Freetown. The natives of the various coast islands long since found it to their interest to be friendly with the mariners, who in turn show no disposition to regard these in the light of an enemy. These were the first savages I had ever seen, and I gazed on them for several minutes with curiosity and astonishment. The utter absence of any wearing apparel on their part at first put me under a kind of restraint, which I with difficulty overcame. In fact, when one of their native women, in a state of utter *puris naturalibus*, offered to cook food for me, I evinced my repugnance to the entire proceeding in a fashion which to them must have been very apparent and insulting. After that they made all haste to get me into a small boat, formed from a couple of hollowed logs, and directed a youth of about sixteen years to paddle me to Kacundi. This settlement was on the adjacent opposite shore. I left with them a number of trinkets of small continental value, but for which they would gladly have given up the prize for which I sought. Mindful of your instructions, however, to procure an infant of two to three years, of a tribe flourishing upon the mainland, and if possible a little to the interior, I put the island of Morai behind me, and by the aid of the rude rudder steered as the black youth directed.

There was not a single human being on the beach when I landed from the boat. It was after sun-down, and for the first time since the commencement of the undertaking, I confess I stood aghast at my own temerity. That there were white settlers here I did not for a moment doubt, but with the absence of law and civilization, their color would but enhance the difficulties of the situation. I therefore made signs to the boy to proceed at once to the cabin of the whites and give them news of my arrival. It was quite dusk when he returned, but several rods distant I made out the figure of a man by his side. The man I knew at once to be a European, because I detected the flapping of an outer garment to the wind. He was but slightly taller than the Morai youth and stooped considerably in his carriage. As he drew near I observed that he was of about my own age, his hair being white or nearly so. I had some doubt about his nationality, owing to the tanned condition of his skin, exposed as it was continually to the burning tropical sun ; but I was not left long in conjecture upon this head, for after adjusting a pair of spectacles, which he took from his pocket, he uttered an ejaculation of astonishment as sincere as it was loud. I can now readily understand his amazement, which, in truth, did not occur to me at the time. The sight of a solitary Englishman landing on a barbarous coast, satchel in hand, and looking for all the world as if he had just stepped out of the train at Charing Cross Station—this being the simile Roderick Allen afterward used—must indeed have been impressive. After staring at me for some moments,

“ Who are you ? ” he asked.

“ My name is John Holland, a barrister of Waverley Court, London, charged with a mission to Africa.”

At these words my companion turned deadly pale, tottered visibly, and exclaimed :

“ My God ! ” and afterward, in a tone of more self-possession, “ What folly ! ” and then to me :

“ Have you a mission here ? Why do you land so far up the coast ? How did you land ? Are you not aware that this is a hostile settlement ? ”

He plied me with so many questions that I was fain to answer his last query first, which I did by observing that I was far from being aware that the tribe of Kacundi was hostile to the whites. On the contrary, I had been implicitly assured that it was most friendly, and that, furthermore, several English traders had settled in the locality.

“ I see you have not been informed of the present condition of affairs in this part of Senegambia. The whites were all massacred last spring, and none have since dared to show themselves or renew negotiations. All the trading of the tribe is done with the Arabs, to the north.”

“ How, then, do you survive ? ” I exclaimed, in a tone of astonishment.

My companion smiled and executed a deep, meaningful gesture.

“ I am one of the chiefs of the Kacundi,” he replied. I thought he uttered the words bitterly.

“ Why, then,” said I, “ you must be Roderick Allen ! ”

The man started as if a bolt of lightning had smitten him.

“Do not be astonished at that,” I made haste to say. “Perhaps you recall Mr. Inigo Bright, a young Englishman who travelled through this country three years ago. If you are Roderick Allen, I have a message from him to you and also a small package, which he bade me deliver to you in case you were still alive.”

At the mention of Mr. Bright your lordship would have been surprised to see the change of an opposite character which came over Roderick Allen. His face lit up with the sense of recollection, and he came forward and held out his hand. He bade the negro boy begone to his island with the boat. I observed he spoke to the youth in the latter’s native tongue, a succession of unpleasant, guttural tones, anything but musical to the ear of a European. He then turned to me and bade me accompany him, at the same time assisting me with the valise. We reached a series of thatched mud huts after eight minutes’ moderate walking, during which I meditated upon my prospects and surroundings. As for my companion, he never offered to sound a syllable. Choosing the most pretentious cabin of the group, Roderick Allen made directly for it, bidding me remain outside for an instant until he should return. I was directly under a row of palm-trees when he left me.

I could readily distinguish noises and the light of a torch proceeding from the cabin, which was large in comparison and capable of holding, I should think, ten persons. I looked at my watch—it was twenty

minutes to eight—and sat down upon my satchel, which I placed on end for the purpose.

There has never been a moment in my life when I felt more thoroughly composed and less the spirit of fear. The night was very warm, but there was a fine sea breeze, and I have never seen so grand a moon. I adjudged the body of the natives to be asleep, so quiet and reposedful everything was. 'Twas exactly twenty minutes before Roderick Allen returned, yet I had not evinced the slightest impatience.

Indeed, in this singular emergency I experienced a certain exaltation of spirit which I had never before known. It seemed as if I had been injected into another age and atmosphere, as well as another clime. If a horde of blood-thirsty savages had suddenly emerged and come upon me, I doubt if I should have been betrayed into a single expression of sinister emotion.

Your lordship will pardon me for saying that, whenever it please God to remove me from this earth, I may meet the blow with similar fortitude of mind to the one I have now feebly attempted to describe.

When Roderick Allen came to seek me, he was accompanied by six or eight of the most ferocious-looking human beings I had ever set eyes on. I had seen savages upon exhibition at the Crystal Palace some years ago, but they must have been transported from some less barbarous tribe, or were partially civilized themselves. The horrible, sensual mouths of these people, with their huge, projecting teeth, especially struck me as revolting. I was so much occupied with my own thoughts that I had not ob-

served them until they had drawn quite near. They gesticulated quite violently for several moments, but when they had observed me and heard my voice, they quieted down and seemed not ill pleased at my visit.

Roderick Allen then informed me that I should spend the night at his cabin and might acquaint him of my project in the morning. To this I readily agreed, and, the blacks having left us, we made our way to another dwelling, where several women were awaiting my companion's return. These, he told me, were his wives, two of whom, acting under his orders, immediately busied themselves in warming over the flesh of some animal for our supper, from which he had been hastily summoned by my boatman from Morai. We talked little at our meal, during which the negresses, with one exception, absented themselves from the cabin proper and sought repose for the night. Upon its conclusion Roderick Allen showed me my bunk of palm leaves, and asked me if I were ready to retire. Upon my assenting, he immediately extinguished the two torches and, throwing himself down on a similar pallet, made as if to sleep. His heavy, regular breathing for a time did not deceive me in believing him actually in slumber, for I myself practised the same deception for upward of an hour, in order to assure him, when I fell into a state of drowsiness and slept till morning.

Roderick Allen did not once close his eyes. After becoming acquainted with his history I did not much wonder at that.

At daybreak I found him up, and I then proceeded to lay before him the nature of my mission and deliver

the small parcel of books which Mr. Bright had intrusted me with. He was silent during the whole of my talk, but when I was quite through he observed that it would be fatally impossible to secure so much as a lock of wool from the head of any male infant of the Kacundi tribe. There were, however, tribes to the north and east whose skin was blacker and who had never, to his knowledge, come in contact with a white man. Their types were purer, but they were not cannibals, like the natives of the coast. With them I would find no such obstacle thrown in my path, for if I marked my plans well I could secure any male infant I chose, with the chief's connivance.

“What do you mean by working my plans well?” I asked.

“I suppose you come well supplied with knick-knacks for barter?” he said.

I told him I had plenty of English currency, and he informed me I could exchange it for beads and rings with the Kacundi. He seemed highly pleased with the present of the books, but took occasion to say: “When your young English traveller was here, he was the first intelligent white man I had seen in years. I loved to talk with him, and the desire to read came upon me strongly. But,” he added, passing his hand through his white hair, “I have changed much even during five years. My hold on Europe grows less strong, and I often think I shall die a barbarian. If it were not for my habit of talking much to myself, I even fancy I should long ago have relinquished my language and yours!”

CHAPTER VI.

“ Harold was he hight ; but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say.”

—BYRON.

REALIZING that I had now plenty of time to spare, I remained a full week with Roderick Allen and the Kacundi tribe before setting out with an interpreter for the north.

I refrain from any further enlargement of the life and surroundings of these people, fearing that in the light of recent matter which has appeared in print, your lordship will find the narrative tedious.

On October 29th we set out on the journey of eighty miles northward. Waki-waki was the curious name of the rather intelligent black who accompanied me. Waki-waki was the body-servant of the white chieftain, and had picked up, somehow, just enough English for me to convey to him my simpler ideas and desires. The route was partially on the sea-coast and partially through a tract of semi-desert country. We bore a rude pannier full of those articles which the tribes we had just left had only been too glad to exchange for the glittering sovereigns of the white man.

My advent into the settlement of the Mabri created the most intense excitement. Naked savages ran hither and thither to apprise their friends, at the same time swinging their immense spears and creating a

perfect pandemonium of yells. It seemed as if a sable Bedlam had broken loose.

Notwithstanding these alarming demonstrations, the chief received me cordially. I think he may have been impelled toward this demeanor after seeing what I carried. On the other hand, he was the only man in the tribe, I afterward learned, who had ever laid eyes on a white skin.

I stood in the centre of a sort of rude public square, shortly after my arrival, while the chief sent his negroes to prepare a hut for my accommodation. All about me the nude savages crowded, but never so close as to touch my person, about which they appeared to entertain a kind of superstition. The women were especially attracted by curiosity at my clothing, whose purpose, no doubt, occasioned as much speculation as the color of such portions of my body as were visible. I had especially cautioned Waki-waki under no circumstances to relate or allude to, in any way, the object of my visit before any but the chief of the tribe himself.

While, after glancing at the countenance of Maguzala, upon which greed, covetousness, and weakness of character were too strongly impressed not to be apparent, I had no doubt of prevailing with him, at the same time I desired to have a private conference, with the aid of Waki-waki, and primarily make sure of my ground. When, therefore, the sovereign of the Mabri announced that my hut was ready, I determined to wait until morning before I broached the subject at all.

Early the next day, after feasting liberally upon pineapples and dried rhinoceros flesh, I waited upon

his majesty, Maguzala, and then and there indulged in a conversation such as the primitive form of our mutual expression would permit of.

Now, almost the first thing this chief observed was, whether I wanted slaves and whether I would not accept a half dozen off-hand from him. I was not prepared for this opportunity, but quickly saw that it would be wise to immediately avail myself of it. Ignoring, then, my previous resolution, I made bold to state at once my quest.

I wanted a healthy male infant, perfectly black and sound and natural in every physical particular, to be not above two or two and a half years, that being the period when the least risk would attach to his removal.

Maguzala listened with an animated countenance, and at the end expressed his perfect ability to comply with every detail of my request.

He seemed glad to think he had got off so easily, and when I called Waki-waki and displayed the treasures of the rude basket, he was overjoyed, and grinned and gesticulated incessantly. Upon my part, the interview concluded, I returned to my hut, and composed myself with a couple of fans, with the understanding that all would be satisfactorily arranged during the afternoon.

After the great heat of the meridian had subsided, therefore, I sauntered out with Waki-waki and two servants, provided by the chief, Maguzala, for my escort, to select an infant such as I desired. It never once entered my head that I was committing anything which was not in the highest degree laudable, in res-

euing a soul from among these wretched savages to a place in the lap of European civilization. That the relatives of such a child would experience the slightest twinge of sorrow or regret at such a proceeding I had good reason to emphatically doubt, from the readiness with which their chief acceded to my proposition. Many of these savages had a dozen children, and I deemed would be glad to part with one of them for treasures far dearer to their hearts.

During my walk, in which I was attended by the king's servants, bearing palm leaves over my head, an incident occurred which I must not forbear to mention. I have already observed that the women of the tribe were most keenly alive to my presence ; now, much to the mortification and chagrin of the male negroes, who, standing off at a little distance, contemplated me with ill-concealed distrust. These negresses were entirely nude and remarkably well formed. Their swelling hips and polished black skins reminded me of certain paintings which his late lordship had imported from Morocco, the work of a Frenchman resident in that country. The women followed me about with lecherous glances, and finally one of them, either stumbling or through design, caught hold of my upper garment. The instant she did so, her companions set up a hideous cry, which was caught up by the whole camp. Scores of blacks, who, knowing my intimacy with Maguzala, had permitted their wives to follow me, with no other emotion than that of curiosity, now came running in my direction, with their spears poised, and uttering the most fearful yells.

I really believed my last hour had come.

The tumult was interrupted at this juncture by Maguzala himself, who at once divined the cause, and bade his warriors disperse. The incident, however, made a great impression upon my mind, and convinced me that I was unpopular and that my best course was to hurry, at any odds, the moment of my return. Were the reason of my presence known, it might indeed go hard with me.

Accordingly, I repaired to the chief's hut at dusk, where several black women and Maguzala himself were awaiting my arrival. A row of sturdy black infants lay upon the floor of the royal cabin. Maguzala informed me that these were the mothers of the children I saw, and that I might choose one to my liking and depart the next morning. The women were a crafty, shame-faced lot, I thought, and by no means so young and comely as those who had dogged my footsteps during the afternoon.

I quickly made a choice. One of the infants was so incomparably superior to the other five, that I ordered an immediate examination of his person. His skin was of the color of ebony, his teeth perfectly white and even, and his hair of that glossy texture, common, I believe, to certain tribes. His nose was not so flat as that of the adult negro, in this respect resembling, however, Maguzala himself, as well as in the thinness of his lips.

But here I am assured that almost all the facial characteristics of the negro are developed during the period of adolescence by the bestiality of his conduct, for all the countenances of Mabri children I had seen

of from two to ten years were far from being coarse. The thickness of the lips invariably accentuates the flatness of the nasal organ, I am told.

I signified at once to the chief my disposition to bind the bargain at once, to which Maguzala cheerfully agreed.

What was my amazement to see in the putative parent of the infant I had chosen a wizened old woman, with dried-up breasts and a shock of gray, grizzly wool, which completely covered her ears and otherwise overspread her countenance. I could scarce refrain from uttering the exclamation which was on my lips, to think that such a perfect offspring could descend from such a mother.

I cut short my feelings of surprise, however, in the thought that I was doubly fortunate, for the old hag's eyes sparkled at the paltry beads and earrings which I handed her (at the direction of Maguzala, who, cunning rogue, retained about four fifths of the treasure for himself), and seemingly was glad to get rid of her brat upon such terms. The child was forthwith cared for in the royal hut, against my departure in the morning, when the chief had promised me an escort for a third of my journey back to the coast.

The same evening I retired to my own habitation with Waki-waki, and, having partaken of a bountiful meal sent from the royal kitchen, extinguished the torch and closed my eyes in slumber.

The hut in which I slept was a rudely thatched structure of clay and bark, having a single entrance, which was invariably guarded by a stack of rushes and plant stalks, and behind these Waki-waki, the

interpreter, slept. It is the custom of the Mabri and all neighboring tribes to retire immediately after dusk and sleep till daybreak. Of midnight theft, assassination, and warfare they knew nothing. In time of war darkness is a sign for the cessation of hostilities, and the man who attempted to revenge himself upon his enemy under cover of night would be held up to the execration and barbarism of the whole tribe. The Mabri is not what would be called a hospitable nation, but the stranger need have no fear of nocturnal treachery, of all treachery instinctively the most base. With this I explain to your lordship why I slept in utter security and apprehended no danger.

I could not recall what my dreams were when I awoke, but I was sure they were of a thoroughly peaceful nature. It was still almost pitch dark. I arose on my elbow and tried to peer about, speculating the while upon the causes of my awakening. These I felt would not be easy of discovery, and I was on the point of again dropping back on my primitive pillow, when a slight noise, proceeding from the door of the hut, roused me at once.

Without making the slightest movement which could be heard, I sat up and waited patiently for the cause. Waki-waki's heavy breathing convinced me that he was fast asleep, and the noise I had heard was that of a soft tread, together with a slight metallic tinkle, which I knew he could not possibly have made. I was convinced that this was what had awakened me. Meantime, it rapidly grew light, but not enough for me to distinguish an object in a distant corner of the hut.

Without waiting any longer, therefore, for developments, I immediately sprang up, and grasping the torch which lay on the ground near me (and which I had no means of relighting), sallied to the door of the hut and peered out. I could see objects plainer there, but not a living thing was in sight. Conceiving the idea of some animal, tame or otherwise, ensconced in the hut, I returned immediately, and began to lay the end of the torch about me, in the hopes of striking something.

Unsuccessful in this, I made as if to return to my couch, when, to my utter horror and amazement, I found it, or rather felt it already occupied. That it was a human being I knew full well ; there could be no mistaking the touch of his or her skin.

Of a sudden it flashed upon me that this was a woman, in all probability one of the women who had followed me the previous day.

Although an exceedingly modest man, and much alive to feelings of delicacy, the presence of this amorous black woman inspired me only with a feeling of anger, not unmixed with disgust. Her motives I could readily divine, and I lost no time in deciding the course I should pursue. I was on the point of arousing Waki-waki, when a terrible shriek rent the air, and Waki-waki himself sprang up near the entrance, only to find himself felled to earth again by a hand much more powerful than his own. In the struggle that ensued I became conscious of the figure of a woman dashing past me out into the open air, where it was now quite light. Realizing what this turmoil might cost me, I took advantage of the moment when

the tussle between the two negroes was the fiercest to make good my exit, which I did as fast as my legs would carry me, in the direction of the royal hut.

Simultaneously the whole settlement was in an uproar.

I divined during my flight the connection between the negress who had invaded my hut and the man who had followed her and assailed my faithful Kacundi. The chief had just arisen when I entered. "What," thought I, "am I to do without an interpreter?" I therefore signified to the astonished Maguzala my distress as best I could, and implored his protection. Whether he had future commercial transactions of a similar nature or the fear of the presently hostile Kacundi before his eyes I shall never know, but, at all events, he determined not to sacrifice me. He was not left long in doubt as to the real nature of the danger which threatened me. I was the first white man ever to set foot upon that soil, and the blacks evidently regarded me as an evil spirit, whom they had sworn to slaughter. If their awe for their chief's person was not very great, there had not now been the slightest chance that I should have survived to tell this tale. These shrieking, foaming savages surrounded the dwelling and began a blood-curdling war-dance, tossing their lances in mid-air and constantly being augmented from distant parts of the settlement, until several hundred were gathered together. Maguzala coolly donned his great war plume, and, grasping a monstrous spear in his right hand, went to the door of the hut, attended by two of his servants. The multitude of savages then only increased their yelling

until he waved to them to be silent. Maguzala then loudly uttered a few guttural sounds, of no import to me, and a great body of blacks came over and stood by his side. Maguzala then addressed them again, and immediately there were more horrid cries. One savage, more obstreperous than the rest, shook his lance in the king's face. The whole tribe started, and I could see, even under his black skin, Maguzala's face grow paler. The words he uttered were horrible in their fierceness and blood-curdling in their consequence.

The wretched man's head was immediately severed from his shoulders, and a stream of hot blood gushed up into the air.

It was the most sickening sight I ever saw or that can possibly be imagined. My heart for a moment actually ceased to beat. Every savage face grew livid with terror.

In the midst of this silence I heard the voice of Waki-waki, and presently my faithful negro was borne into Maguzala's presence with a great wound, made by a spear, in his left arm. The chief of the tribe ordered him to be freed, and Waki-waki then told how he had been awakened and wounded, after which he explained to me by gestures, positively indecent, the charges against me. By thumping himself violently on the throat with his clenched fist, he demonstrated the punishment the tribe demanded for myself and the woman.

Shocked almost beyond expression, I indignantly denied the charges, and demanded of Maguzala permission to leave the country without further delay.

At this, as if divining my words, the cries were renewed with even increased vigor, and the same motions and gesticulations were repeated. It was in vain that the more violent were threatened with instant death ; a seeming majority demanded my blood as revenge for betraying a woman of their tribe, and pretended to repel my denial.

The scenes that followed I will not shock your lordship by attempting to describe. I remained barricaded in the royal hut while Maguzala asserted his authority over the insurgents by knife and lance. I have no doubt that the loyal savages easily carried the day. But when the noise of the conflict had moved away to some distance from the royal hut, Maguzala sent back a dozen of his men with the message, delivered by signs, that I must flee. Hastily, therefore, calling to one of the women who had remained in the adjoining hut (the two connecting by a single entrance), I bid them bring the black child with them, which they did. Five of the band only were to accompany Waki-waki and myself, and that for the first day only ; and these, with the assistance of the women, got together enough provisions to last us on our three days' journey ; after which, with the noise of the fighting still in our ears, we were soon on the march southward. That was on Monday, the 3d of November. Tuesday morning I and my escort parted. Waki-waki's wound had been a severe one, but he had it bandaged, and did not seem to mind it much.

The black child was under my especial care, each of us taking turns at carrying it, and I concerning

myself that he should not lack for food or drink or become ill during the journey. On the afternoon of the same day Waki-waki suddenly stopped, and with a look of intense sagacity motioned to me that we were followed.

I counselled against it, but he persisted in leaving me for a few moments, just as we had passed over a slight knoll upon which several palm-trees grew, and retracing his steps back over this slight eminence.

I heard him give a slight cry an instant later, and would have gone back to inquire the cause but for my young charge, whom I determined to guard religiously.

It was fully five minutes before he returned, and rendered me the astounding information that two young women were following us. Furthermore, that these two were sisters, and, to Waki-waki's eyes, beautiful; that one of them was the mother of the black child I was carrying off and the other the female who had in such an extraordinary manner *esteemed me her lover!* To say that I was staggered by this intelligence would be to express myself in very mild terms. I did not know for an instant what course to pursue. I inquired of Waki-waki what should best be done under the circumstances. My companion replied that if the younger of the two women went back to her tribe, her husband would murder her in the most shocking manner. The other wanted her offspring returned to her, but dared not demand it of me and incur the enmity of Maguzala. Waki-waki described to me her rage and de-

spair at the royal theft of her child, and suggested that the only way to rid ourselves of the dilemma was to kill both women ; otherwise she would either set upon me and tear my eyes out (he pointing to his disabled arm), in the effort to regain her infant, or, what was worse still, would stir up enmity against me among the Kacundi.

To this horrible proposition I revolted with energy, and was beginning to think of some way out of the difficulty, when Waki-waki gave a sudden cry of warning, and I sprang up with the infant just in the nick of time. The bushes at our side had parted, and a tall, agile negress made at me desperately. She was too apparently in just the condition my black man had described—rendered half mad with grief and hatred.

I had just evaded her first onslaught, when another black figure, which I readily recognized, appeared in hot pursuit of the other.

Before either of us could interfere she had sprung like a tiger at the throat of her sister and bore her to earth.

The battle was short and fierce, and the result might have been doubtful had not Waki-waki attempted to interfere, whereupon the younger darted upon a knife which hung in his belt, and wielded it with quick and awful cunning.

In another second her sister, both born of the same mother, lay dead at her feet.

During the short struggle the breasts of both women had heaved, their lips had reddened, their whole forms had assumed that terrible feminine grandeur which is

common to woman inspired with fierce emotion in every clime. Rooted to the spot as I was out of infinite horror, I could not resist the feeling of admiration which I felt stealing over me, at the sight of this battle of real Amazons. Amazons, I may remark, both were, but both were impelled by the heart and the affections. The one sought to protect me from worse than a tiger's rage, that of a mother wronged, and the other to rescue her child and wreak vengeance on its abductor.

When the younger woman saw what she had done, she threw away the bloody weapon, and before I could prevent ran and hung weeping about my neck. I will pass over my thoughts at the moment. Who can explain the universal mystery of the human heart —the inscrutable passion of one soul for another, although debased and dense in its knowledge of humanity ?

* * * * *

Let me also pass over our return to the country of the Kacundi. I could not leave this woman to the rude mercy of her enemies. Indeed, I could not, even if I had wished. I saw, besides, that I had overlooked the difficulty of attending a two-year infant on an ocean voyage alone, that a nurse was indispensable. In short, I conquered my aversion, and the black woman accompanied me aboard ship, which, I should state, was the *Bellaire*, the *Queen Vic* having been detained in an unforeseen manner, after leaving Cape Town, by the disabling of her rudder during a gale. The captain had been kind enough to signal the *Bellaire* to stop at the Bissagos, whither I boarded her, and took leave of my friend, Roderick Allen.

But I was not yet destined to be free from all anxiety about the success of my expedition.

On the fifth day of our voyage the black child was taken violently ill. I was in despair, and paid not the slightest attention to the curiosity and amazement of the crew, but walked about the decks all day long in the extremest agitation. Knowing that I wished it, the black girl (she could not have been more than eighteen or nineteen) attended the child unceasingly, day and night.

I never discovered the cause of his complaint, for on the eighth day he died, and I was thrown into utter despair.

I was not long to remain in this condition, however, for the captain, to whom I had confided the manner in which I had been undone, observed :

“ Is that all? Is a little nigger all you want? Well, I think *we shall have one before the month is out.*”

The captain eventually proved right. He had observed what I should never have thought to notice. The negress, whom I had named Chloe, was *enceinte*. But whether the child would be a male or female subjected me to so much agony of suspense that I will pass over it in haste. My faith in Providence told me that it would be a boy, and I at length left it in His hands. The great load was shortly, as you know, lifted off my mind.

The voyage was short and propitious, and after one hundred and forty-two days' absence from England, I landed with my extraordinary mission fulfilled, by the grace of Providence, even more than to the letter.

CHAPTER VII.

Dem. Soft ; who comes here ?

Enter a Nurse, with a black-a-moor child in her arms.

—*Titus Andronicus.*

THE country-seat of Lord Middleton, at Capenhurst, comprised rather more than five hundred acres of mere and woodland.

In former times it had been situate in the hamlet of Dubersly, which since the epoch of reform had diffused and finally centred itself two miles to the south in the borough of Capenhurst. The mansion itself was of brick and red sandstone, turreted and gabled in the goodly style of our great-great-grandfathers.

The only time Dubersly was occupied was during the summer season, when its sides were half covered over with striped Venetian awnings, which not only harmonized well with the landscape, but lent the mansion at times a decidedly modern appearance. Its interior was less modern and more picturesque. The furniture had all come down recently from his present lordship's London house, where Lady May Dubersly concluded it was no longer in vogue—too heavy and of too stately a pattern to be cheerful in the sight of the invalid. In at least two of the apartments at Dubersly the ancestral portraits of the family stared, grim and speechless, from their frames. They were a good-natured and jolly, if a thoroughly conservative lot—

Lord Middleton's ancestors—if one might judge from these portraits.

Dubersly House was built in 1713 ; a medallion of the great duke was imbedded in one of the marble panels over the portico, with a date below it, " May 12, 1713"—the day of the signing of the Utrecht Peace. On that day, too, the house was finished, and Duberslys had come and gone since then ; branches of the family had been given marquisates and even earldoms, but the descendants of the Dubersly—he who was Grand High Equerry to the Conqueror—never aspired to anything above their estate, which might be supposed, as one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, had always been highly honorable.

Henry Charles, Lord Middleton, was the first marquis in the direct line.

A whole year had elapsed since Inigo Bright and his friend gossiped on the wide lawn. It was now a clear, open day in early June. Andrew, the Scotch gardener, was industriously working a scythe upon the aspiring sheaves of early summer grass. Mrs. Jennet, the housekeeper, had set three or four cages of canaries out to bask in the warm sunshine. The mansion was undergoing the usual annual cleaning and renovation. Kingsley, one of the big footmen in Caermarthen Square, had arrived a couple of days previously to assist the housekeeper in putting everything at Dubersly to rights, in view of its approaching summer occupancy. At present this worthy was engaged in fanning his reclining person within one of the antique bay-windows.

"Hit's a damn houtrage," he soliloquized, with much less energy of manner than his statement seems to call for. "What's a damn outrage, Kingsley?" (It was Kingsley's characteristic to soliloquize thus.) "Wy, to arsk a gentleman to trapse hup an' down arfter a' old 'ag, honly because the gentleman spoke of 'appens to be hofficiating *as* footman in a 'igh fam'ly. Just to think, a-washink windows, an' a-cleanink furniture—*in the country!*!"

The personage officiating as footman in a high family laid especial stress upon the rustic situation of the aforementioned employments. It appeared as if the washing of windows and the cleansing of furniture was humiliating under any circumstances; to be obliged to perform these functions *in the country* was adding to their natural indignity and degradation.

"The very hidea of respectable people a-leavink Lunnon an' Brighton an' Parry to hexist 'ere is more than I can conjecture. Two miles for a drop o' gin, and then honly 'alf a public as is a public. Now, *my* advice is— 'Ullo—I say, wot are you a-doink 'ere, my man?"

A pale little boy in a green coat stood staring pleasantly at Mr. Kingsley. During the first part of that footman's chaste monologue the pale little boy had been making his way from the entrance to Dubersly, along the path which traversed the front lawn, wholly unobserved.

"Well, ragamuffin, speak hup," pursued Kingsley, in a lordly yet tolerant way. "Wot's yer message? Wot 'ave yer got, my fine feller? The butcher is to

send hover a pound of meat or p'raps the village tinker presents 'is compliments—hey? Come, 'and it hover to me."

The ragamuffin's expression grew to one of intense amusement.

"To you?" he returned, slowly, and with edifying sarcasm. "O—oh! P'raps we don't know who we is? No; p'raps not. W'itechapel fer a farden's wort'. Does your mistress 'appen to be hengaged or does she 'appen to be wery busy? Say!"

Mr. Kingsley started up with that ominous frown which, when worn by footmen, is fatal to small boys—*i.e.*, plebeian small boys.

"Keep off, ol' feller, no larks," continued the youthful messenger in green. "I'm a-droppink in fer a friendly wisit on Mrs. J. Jennet, your wery indulgent mistress—hi!—help! lemme go!"

This last piece of insolence was more than Mr. Kingsley could stand. With agility unusual for him he sprang and caught the offender by the coat-collar. It was about to go hard with the youth when the housekeeper herself appeared. At which the pale boy in green immediately announced himself in his capacity of errand-boy, lately established at Pope's Inn, and present messenger from the residence of Mr. John Holland, barrister, whither his lordship and Inigo Bright had repaired the previous evening. The letter he bore was formally delivered into the hands of the housekeeper, and by her read as follows:

POPE'S INN, 5 o'clock P.M., June the 5th.

MY DEAR MRS. JENNET: Lord Middleton has instructed me to tell you that, although he has decided

not to occupy Dubersly House this summer, the same must be ready for immediate occupancy. Mr. Inigo Bright will be down by an early coach to-morrow, and the new occupants of Dubersly House will follow on Thursday—if nothing prevents. Kingsley is instructed to remain for some two weeks longer or until his lordship notifies him. His lordship believes he can trust you to attend to every detail attending the approaching occupancy in a faithful and conscientious manner.

Believe me, my dear Jennet,

Your friend,

JOHN HOLLAND.

CHAPTER VIII.

"We often hear of hereditary talents, hereditary vices, and hereditary virtues, but whoever will critically examine the evidence will find that we have no proof of their existence."—BUCKLE, *History of Civilization*.

THE appointed Thursday came and went and many others along with it. So quietly had the secret been kept that none of the villagers of Capenhurst knew of the arrival of the strange little personage who was to be thenceforth for many years master of Dubersly House.

That little personage was now six months old. Precisely that period before the little black boy had been ushered into the world at the sign of the Blue Dragon, at Portsmouth, to relieve the mind of the intrepid solicitor and fulfil the captain's predictions. Both Inigo Bright and Lord Middleton had posted down from London on purpose to be present. Such an array of medical talent had in all human probability never attended a single birth in the town before as might have been seen there that morning. No prince of the blood royal, it is certain, could have received more attention than was accorded the offspring of the negress Chloe. It was a simple affair to her, being young and vigorous, and there is every reason to believe her untutored intellect marvelled much at the unwonted ceremony.

When it was all over, the three parties most interested in the success of this most important factor in their experiment repaired to a private apartment which the landlord of the establishment placed at their disposal, and drank the health of John Holland, the doctors, the new-born infant, and various other persons and things which seemed momentarily plausible. The next step was to provide suitable temporary quarters for the mother and child until the latter's physical prosperity became assured, which was accordingly done by the indefatigable old lawyer. Everybody connected with the transaction of the morning was pledged to secrecy for obvious reasons. The barrister committed his narrative to paper, and, being duly read and approved, was treasured among the archives of the *Experiment*. It is almost needless to say that that portion of the narrative relating to Chloe had a remarkable fascination for Bright.

It will have been observed that in his account the garrulous old lawyer has most rigorously excluded everything which treats of the strange and unfortunate passion bred and subsequently continued by the negress for his person. The reproachful melancholy and fits of weeping which marked her existence aboard the *Bellaire* were *temporarily* interrupted by the birth of her babe. Indeed, from the first she conceived a violent antipathy to her own offspring, and had to be watched carefully in order that she might not take it into her head to do the child some injury.

Her strange, one-sided love for the solicitor soon reasserted itself. From that time forward until the day of her death she continued to pine away in almost

intermittent silence. The poor woman obstinately refused to learn a word of the civilized tongue and happily for her—her new refuge being situate in the suburbs—failed to create the consternation which her moods and appearance at times would certainly evoke from the inhabitants of a more populous neighborhood.

Chloe died in early summer, shortly after her babe was weaned. She was buried in a country churchyard near Cowes, and over her grave was set a stone. It may be seen at this day, bearing these words :

NIGRA SED PULCHRA
IN UTILITATE ;
INVITÂ MINERVÂ,
AUXILIATRIX SAPIENTIÆ.

Requiescat in Pace.

Her death naturally effected the immediate removal of Harold (as the child was christened, shortly before leaving Portsmouth) to Dubersly House, the young lord having decided to take the oft-proffered advice of his physicians and remain abroad. Perhaps he would never again occupy Dubersly. If he needed a rural existence in England, he used to say in a joking way, he would go to Scotland. He could get a more congenial estate over the Border at a bargain. But just now the country and country people bored him and made his physical infirmities seem greater than they really were. He differed from most invalids in that urban atmosphere acted as a sort of tonic upon his temperament, and London and Paris in the height of the season, San Carlos, Aix-les-Bains,

and Carlsbad, with their crowds of fashion and their excitement, always had a soothing smile for him. During those periods when he made rustic concessions to his medical men, his tenants, and to his sister, whose house parties were becoming rapidly popular, Lord Henry suffered frightful *ennui*. It may have been noticed that the young lord was a peculiar product. Fashionable wits said that Henry Dubersly would have been a great man if he had not been cut out for a great invalid. For the rest, it is enough to say of him that without his co-operation, however whimsical, the remarkable experiment of Mr. Inigo Bright, herewith under record, might never have been undertaken.

As for Lady May, his lordship's sister, it was generally agreed that she was a very charming young person, whose devotion to her brother was famous far and wide. Her great friend at Paris, indeed, her old school friend (afterward the famous Madame de Salécy), had told her that she was an *ingénue*, which was, by the by, a great compliment, coming from the Frenchwoman.

It was at Paris that her brother, the invalid, had suddenly fallen in love with his sister's charming friend. Lady May displayed great tact in averting an avowal on his part, *considering* that she was an *ingénue*. Her friend was nice and agreeable, to be sure, but *she was a Frenchwoman!*

The following year the latter became the wife of the banker, the Marquis de Salécy.

As for the household at Dubersly, its members were truly paralyzed over the new advent for the first few

days, but it was not long before the norms of the manor obtained their accustomed placidity. Time slipped by without any incident worthy of record.

For the first year Bright came down regularly from London, whither he was rapidly laying the foundation for that subsequent fame—a fame which has resounded throughout all England—and superintended and directed the child's welfare. Every Saturday afternoon the housekeeper and the three or four servants installed in the establishment knew they were to expect Mr. Bright. They had already come to regard him as the real master of Dubersly House, at least during such period as the young lord continued to reside abroad. He habitually questioned each of the servants closely, more particularly Ellen, the nurse, concerning the diet and proper airing of little Harold. Some of the instructions have been faithfully preserved to this day. They are certainly interesting.

The infant was not to be out-of-doors too much ; its food was to be of the most delicate variety, sparingly administered ; its clothing of the softest and lightest texture ; above all, the nurse was never to omit the tepid bath twice a day, morning and night.

Other directions were administered of a peculiar nature, with a view apparently to assuage the infant from the influences of its paternity. For many weeks a noted Edinburgh surgeon resided at the manor, and it is quite worthy of comment that he actually refused to take a fee for so doing. In conjunction with Inigo Bright, this person is declared to have performed a series of singular operations upon the tiny features of the black child.

Much of this has since been denied. There is trustworthy evidence, however, to prove that the poor child's nose was pinched and tweaked to make it straight, his lips were squeezed to make them thin, and his legs splintered and rubbed to prevent the slightest tendency on their part to become bow-shaped !

Between the tortures of having his feet eternally bandaged to make them small and his hair and eyebrows shaved to make them thick and straight, little Harold's existence at this time must have been distant, indeed, from pleasurable.

But through it all the child perseveringly came, and at the age of two years was as fine a little Englishman, from an exterior standpoint, as an ingenious carver could have produced from a block of ebony !

Nor must it be supposed that Harold's mind, or rather his sensibilities were neglected, even at so early an age as three years. He had toys and picture-books by the score. Such were showered upon him with a prodigality which aimed to accustom him to personal splendor and the glory of proprietorship. Ellen Shaw, his nurse, showed herself to be devotedly attached to her strange little charge. She rarely left his side for a moment, and fondled and caressed him with as much tenderness and affection as a black mother could have shown, or, perhaps, if this simile be dubious, as if the child had been her own.

The delight which Ellen exhibited at little Harold's first spoken words, which were forthwith translated to Inigo Bright, was both beautiful and maternal. The nurse asseverated that the process of ablution having been brought to a successful close the morning

in question the infant Harold had uttered, quite distinctly, these words : “ Ess—mamma— Ooo—gar—lugoo—o—o !”

The which, for fear of misconstruction by her listener, she hastened to interpret as an expression of Harold’s regard for his foster-mother, who, in his opinion, was an eminently respectable person. Even Inigo Bright himself could hardly refrain from declaring his thorough satisfaction that the word “ love,” in baby-lore, should be the first to pass the lips of his prodigy.

A child’s lips—portals destined to emit a vast and mighty train before they are set with the immutable seal—gay cavalcades, tender pageants, wise processions, and fierce mobs of words. It were well if the first to pass through, faltering, doubtful of itself, be “ love.”

CHAPTER IX.

“ Coal black is better than another hue,
In that it scorns to bear another hue.”

—*Titus Andronicus.*

INIGO BRIGHT’s prodigy continued to develop into an exceedingly even-tempered, clever child, thus demonstrating, apparently, that even moral disposition is only a matter of physical treatment.

Between the ages of three and four Harold learned to talk rapidly and fluently, and on his fourth birthday earned the right to claim and subdue a fine rocking-horse, which his patron, Lord Middleton, thoughtfully despatched from Germany.

During all this period Harold had scarcely seen a soul apart from those with whom he came in daily contact. He had, it is true, remarked the village butcher, whose redness of jowl and fatness of paunch had from the first elicited his infant admiration. That Harold was a bright child showed itself daily in his talk. The many questions with which he loved to deluge his nurse attested the keenness of his perception—a faculty which seemed to allow nothing which carried even the semblance of a ? to elude it. Naturally, the blackness of his skin was among the first subjects to demand explanation. Inigo Bright had foreseen this, and almost immediately marvellous picture-books, especially designed and colored, ex-

hibiting little black maidens and urchins in time-honored Mother Goose diversions, sprang into being and became part and parcel of the nursery of Dubersly House. The rubicund visage of the butcher was thus emphasized on Harold's mind, and certain vague theories on the non-uniformity of color perplexed his thoughts.

"I think I would rather be black all over than red in spots, like him, mamma," he observed, quite gravely, one morning, after a considerable time spent in a silent weighing of the subject.

One of his favorite queries at this stage was :

"Do black little boy-angels have black wings?"

It is a matter of doubt whether Nurse Ellen was entirely prepared to answer this question of celestial detail. Albeit she never faltered in her assent. "Yes, dear," she said. Harold seemed interested.

"Shiny black, mamma? As black as Richelieu, or only as black as Tray?"

Richelieu was a cat of which Harold had been exceedingly fond. One day his ardent affection had been alienated to a great extent by pussy's shameless conduct. He insisted that Richelieu should share his bath.

"Aren't you 'shame-d of yourself, you dirty, dirty kitty? Come and wash, like Harold!"

But Richelieu, callous to the opinion entertained by mankind, had vigorously declined to be soaped. After a short struggle, in which Harold was severely scratched, his master transferred his affection to Tray, of whose size and shagginess he had previously stood in some fear. The big Newfoundland, easily capable

of bearing the child on his back as far as the latter wished to ride, was thenceforth profoundly attached to his master, and then and there an inseparable companionship was instituted between the two, to last until his dogship had passed to that bourne from which no wise dog or man should elect to return.

After the child of Chloe had passed his fifth year, the faithful nurse and the aged gardener were wont to accompany these two friends on long excursions around the mere and to the berry bushes, which grew about the northern part of the hedge which bounded the estate.

It was upon the occasion of one of these walks that an important incident happened. Believing that he heard the sound of carriage wheels on the driveway, Andrew left the nurse to continue her walk alone or rest until his return. Ellen, whose orders were never to venture out without the escort of the footman or the gardener (exactly for what reason it would be difficult to say), immediately seated herself on a rustic bench near by, and, drawing forth some needle-work from her pocket, commenced to busy herself, while Harold gambolled without restraint on the path before her. Something more than simple needle-work, however, must have engrossed her mind, for, long before she became aware of it, her eyes were quite away from her charge. A number of dazzling butterflies—for it was in the height of summer—had flitted past little Harold. The temptation was great, and unconsciously, making no noise on the soft, velvety sod, he sped after them with all the ardor and enthusiasm of childhood. With Tray bounding before

him he continued to run until he had reached the great hedge, and remarked the gaudiest object of his chase disappear serenely over its summit with the keenest disappointment. Tray, who was even more thoroughly infected with the spirit of the occasion, was not to be balked by such a barrier, and, nosing, dog-like, about, quickly discovered a crevice, through which he bounded, and almost immediately returned to seek his little master. The second time the big Newfoundland scurried under the hedge Harold had preceded him. The child had bounded through the passage with such vigor and agility, indeed, as to plant himself plump into the arms of a small boy, on the very edge of the adjoining domain.

This boy was apparently about three years older than Harold, which is to say, between eight and nine. He was a manly, prepossessing little fellow. The pair were mutually so astonished, that for some moments they stood stock still, staring at each other with saucer eyes. Harold, who was the least astonished, recovered first. He did not express any greeting or frame any apology.

“I am not afraid of you!” he said, stoutly; “*I have seen you in my picture-books.*”

The other boy’s first impulse was to run away, and it was some further moments before he could summon sufficient equanimity to utter a word. When he did so, he ejaculated, forcibly:

“My eyes! What a go!” Then, taking courage from the fact that his companion did not leap upon him and consume him by mouthfuls, he repeated “My eyes!” slowly, amazedly, and thoughtfully

seven times. The small boy then climbed to the top of the hedge and let his feet dangle down from that eminence. At this exploit Harold grew a trifle embarrassed. He felt he ought to say something.

“This is Tray !” he said, presently, proffering the third party at the conference, who immediately set about wagging his tail with the utmost courtesy of demeanor.

“Very well,” assented the other, indifferently, “very well ; but, by George ! who are *you* ?”

“Harold. I live here—that is, over there !” The Experiment pointed a chubby, black finger in the direction of Dubersly.

The elder boy made no answer to this. He spent the next few moments in a minute inspection of Harold’s small person. Before this operation was satisfactorily completed :

“Have you lived over yonder long ?” he inquired.

“Five years,” replied Harold, promptly.

The other gave vent to a long, shrill whistle. It was now Harold’s turn to stare. He had never heard anybody make that kind of a noise before. But he was too polite to comment.

“Were *you*—born that way ?” resumed the elder boy, casting a meaning glance at Harold’s skin.

“I don’t understand you,” faltered Harold.
“What way ?”

“Why, black, of course !”

“Yes ; at least, I think I was. Were you ?” added Harold, delicately.

“Were I—what ?”

“ Born that way ?”

The other laughed uproariously. There was some danger of his falling off the hedge.

“ Hooray !” he repeated ; “ this *is* a lark !” With that he cast glances about the field and woods, as if it were impossible that he could monopolize so great a lark much further alone.

“ Is your name nicer than mine ?” inquired the Experiment.

“ Much nicer,” stated that other, with prompt candor—“ Arthur Danthorne.”

“ Isn’t that a little long ?” ventured Harold.

“ Cracky, no ! What’s the rest of yours ? Something besides Harold, ain’t there ?”

“ I am quite sure there is not !” retorted Harold, decisively.

The pair conversed for five minutes more, while the poor nurse, two hundred yards away, was half beside herself in despair and agitation. Arthur Danthorne descended at length from his perch, and became quite friendly and familiar, after having convinced himself that his new friend was in no way different from any of the six-year-olds of his Axborough acquaintance, apart from the remarkable color of his cuticle. He was certainly a little ignorant, but Master Danthorne readily untook to enlighten him in the mysteries of marbles and kite-flying.

“ My eyes !” he ejaculated, “ but you *are* queer !”

“ Do your—eyes trouble you ?” solicited Harold, with compassion.

“ My—bless you, no ! they do not,” said Master Danthorne.

Harold gave a start.

"I must go back to my mamma. She will miss me," he said, with a twinge of conscience.

His companion opened his favorite organs wider than ever this time.

"Your mamma!" he exclaimed. "Is—is she black, too?"

"No, Arthur Danthorne; she is *pink!*"

Arthur looked wistfully around. Some one must surely behold these cumulative wonders. The sky remained in place.

"It's too bad! Are you going? I shall ask my grandpapa to let me come over and play with you. You know, I don't usually play with small boys. *I* am nearly nine, you know, and the fellows at Axborough would laugh a jolly great deal. Good-by, then."

Whereupon he shook Harold's black hand, which, black as it was, was softer and more delicate than his own, and watched him with interest as the Experiment departed hastily through the crevice in the hedge.

CHAPTER X.

“Quickness of mind and the charms of conversation are gifts of nature or the fruits of an education begun in the cradle.”—BALZAC.

AFTER his interview with Master Arthur Danthorne the mind of Inigo Bright's prodigy widened and began to take a new color. He naturally yearned for companionship.

In the studies of human development which Mr. Bright had made in the course of his travels, he had brought himself to a singular conviction. It was that human character is best moulded or directed at two distinct vital periods—namely, between the ages of four and seven and from fourteen to nineteen.

It was his belief that during the foregoing first period the child should be surrounded by strong adult influences and apart from recreative companionship. After the tension has been drawn, a single hour with a playmate of its own age will suffice to snap it. He alluded to what the world called precocity in children, and observed that the greatest intellects the world has ever seen are spoken of as being precocious during this period.

The bent of a child is naturally toward looseness, idleness, and volatility, and partial solitude, with a thorough intellectual environment, is recommended.

Contrary to accepted belief (so ran his views), the most critical period in the life of a healthy child is between four and seven years. It was then that the spiritual dough received its leaven, that the twig was bent. Even the development of the race, he says, in a more recent pamphlet, is all but the development of the individual.

In due time Harold's tutor arrived, a clever young Alsatian, carefully procured by Inigo Bright, with the assistance of his friend, Lord Middleton. The name of this tutor was Felix Schonberg. He had been a student at Heidelberg, and spoke English quite faultlessly. He was tall, athletic, with a good-humored countenance, versatile, rode like Bertalla and fenced like Du Maitre. After this, what more remains to be said? Harold took to him kindly. Schonberg, for his part, entered into his task with enthusiasm.

“ So you read already, eh ? ” he said to Harold.

“ I think Thomas Merton was a very disagreeable boy,” observed Harold, by way of reply.

“ What books do you like best ? ” asked Felix, smiling in spite of himself.

“ If you please, I enjoy the ‘ Arabian Nights ’ very much, but I like the story of Aladdin best of all.”

“ Ha, ha ! ” Herr Schonberg laughed.

Herr Schonberg fell to work.

When August came, the Axborough scholar, on his vacation, sought in vain for his prospective playmate. Harold was not to be seen. He had his playtime, if in a somewhat different way. The first year was almost entirely devoted to deportment. In those long talks and quiet games with Felix he was really

acquiring much that was to be useful to him in the attainment of Caucasian culture.

On his seventh birthday, it is related that the little prisoner was released for a time, and gave a grand party, at which there were many strange faces, including Arthur Danthorne and two little girl cousins of his lordship. These latter were distinguished by wide-open eyes and insatiable curiosity.

This occasion, as has been shown, marked the end of Harold's isolation, and Arthur Danthorne and the little aristocratic cousins, as well as a youthful pleb from the village, were often visitors at Dubersly Manor. There was no longer any reason why the child should be kept from society ; it was now merely a question of choosing the society he should mingle in.

This Experiment of Mr. Bright's had already begun to be noised in high circles, in which the journalist had begun to move. Shortly after this Bright left journalism for a Parliamentary career.

When Lord Shrewsdale and the Hon. Albemarle Melton came to Dubersly, in the year of grace 187-, they found a fine, manly, curly-haired English boy of eight summers. He was polite, sweet-tempered, and as black as ebony. When they entered the drawing-room, he was standing listening to the crude performances of Ellen Shaw upon the old-fashioned harpsichord. Harold was so occupied that he did not hear the door open and Mr. Bright and the two gentlemen enter. As he turned round and saw them, the child made a bow profound for one of his years. He came forward in a captivating way and shook hands with his guardian, as he had come to know Inigo Bright.

"I am greatly honored to have the pleasure of meeting your lordship. How do you do, Mr. Melton? Shall I ring for some wine?"

Lord Shrewsdale burst into a peal of uncontrollable laughter. Harold's face was perfectly grave and he wore an air of childish dignity.

"What are your studies now, Hal?" asked Mr. Bright. He knew perfectly well.

"Grammar and history and geography, sir. Mr. Felix reads to me in the afternoons and then I read to him. We have read ever so many books that way. I think, perhaps, you would be pleased to know Mr. Felix. Don't you think the gentlemen would like to know my tutor, Uncle Inigo?"

"I dare say the gentlemen would, Hal. In a half hour you may return with him. Run along now for your walk."

"I can hardly believe my senses!" exclaimed Lord Shrewsdale, with emotion, when the black child had left the room. "Why, he has the gentleness and bearing of a duke's son! I would take him for all the world to be an Englishman!"

"Is he not?" asked Albemarle Melton. "I own, for one, I am already converted to the doctrine of organic equality. But, good Heavens! what becomes of race superiority?"

"Never fear," returned the new M.P.; "it will always exist. The past is the past. Pride of blood will ever be pride of blood. You know our modern proverb about machine-made goods. The gold that the alchemist will make offhand out of clay will ever be held inferior to that compounded by nature."

“ Yet 'twill pass 'Change as well. But you are right, the coarsest hand-made lace is deemed far more precious than the finest products of the machine.”

“ Yes,” reflected Lord Shrewsdale, as he journeyed back to Westminster ; “ if this black child fulfils the promise he now shows, our old notions *are* shattered ! One might have suspected that education would have tamed the savage blood in him somewhat ; that in his shallow brain learning might somehow have been pounded like it was into Darwin's Fuegans ; but that he should take kindly to it, that he should develop gentleness and even manliness—well, it's astounding, that's all !”

“ I don't see why it is any more marvellous for the son of a savage to become a savant than for the son of a savant to grow up a savage and feed on roots and shrubs. It is all a matter of health. One could change a man's whole nature if his mind wouldn't give way under the operation. The danger in both cases is that the subject will go off his hooks. Bright will yet have an idiot on his hands.”

Such was Hon. Albemarle Melton's commentary *solus*.

Among the friends of his childhood to whom Harold became sincerely attached was Robert Ellis, a boy of his own age, who had lost both his parents by consumption. He was himself pale and sickly, and evidently not destined long for this world. His uncle was a writer on one of the great London dailies, eking out the paltriest of pittances. Inigo Bright fell upon him, and he secured the friendship of that rising man. When Inigo heard of the misfortune which had be-

fallen the boy, he was at once for carrying him off to Dubersly House, which plan, his fellow-journalist gladly agreeing, was quickly effected. The two boys became from the first mutually fond of each other. Robert was tender, sympathetic, and fonder of study than of violent sport, which made robust little Harold look upon him with compassion, as the strong will look upon the weak. Harold could now ride almost as well as Herr Felix, and indulged freely in all sorts of out-door exercise. Robert looked upon these feats with admiration, and never tired of applauding Hal's skill. Strange as it may seem, it never once entered his mind that there was any difference of caste between him and his comrade. The fact that Harold was a negro seemed to heighten his attraction and make him still more out of the common. In fact, this may not be wondered at much. In Liverpool, where the Ellis family had resided, the neighborhood was not conspicuous for anything besides a horde of small ruffians, whose parents were generally too devoted to their warehouses and avocations to pay much attention to the manner in which their children comported themselves out of school hours. A white boy of Harold's mien and accomplishments would, it is certain, have been a prodigious phenomenon.

So time went on until one day the announcement came that Lord Middleton had decided upon a return to England. It was whispered that the medical fraternity had finally given him up, and that he came home for the simple boon of dying on English soil.

And; indeed, it was only a wreck of his former self

that the cheering villagers saw lifted from his carriage one day and come halting on the arm of his sister and his friend Bright into the halls of his ancestors. Harold was on the steps with the rest of the household, and his lordship had patted him on the head and shaken his hand with evident delight and amazement. He had heard much of his progress and he had the boy's likeness—which, it is interesting to know, had been taken thrice before he was ten—often before him in the apartments at Wiesbaden and Carlsbad. During the next few weeks Harold was his sole recreation. It beat any four physicians in Europe, his lordship used to say, laughing, to hear the young savage, who should have been making a good meal off a broiled missionary by this time, decline Latin nouns by the stringful.

Harold's droll account of the manner in which he and Robert caught a hare—tied twenty yards of twine to its leg and let it go—sent Lady May and himself into peals of merriment. To see Harold ride his pony, he declared, was the best thing, upon his honor, since Astley's. As his lordship grew weaker, he was never so much entertained as when Harold was reading to him stories from “Tom Jones” or “Humphrey Clinker,” or, perhaps, the “Arabian Nights” or “Robinson Crusoe,” all of which his favorite volumes, previously expurgated and amended by Inigo Bright. One day his lordship said :

“ I must have had a presentiment that my share in your experiment, Inigo, would prove wholly selfish. It is as if you had trained something to amuse me. Do you know, I thought I should have burst to-day

when the rascal gravely asked me if I did not consider Crusoe's man Friday a beast. He and his tribe should have been 'ashamed of themselves for going about naked,' said he. By no means, my dear Inigo, abate a jot of his education on my account."

"I told you, Middleton, that I was offered the Berlin consulship last month. I refused it. My book on the Afghan question has brought me a thousand pounds. My share in the *Morning Gazette* brings me that a year."

"You prosper, old fellow. But I hope you do not mean that the boy is becoming costly—that I had better save my money for my heirs?"

Bright was silent.

"Indeed," continued Lord Middleton, merrily, "I may as well inform you that I am very fond of this child. I have left him a matter of thirty thousand in my will."

"But my!" began the other with a flushed brow.

"Tut, tut, there! I wish it. It is better there than with a couple of country cousins whom I have scarcely ever seen. The long line of Dubersly steps down and out when I perform that diverting ceremony."

Inigo did not protest further. He was secretly and outwardly delighted. But he had other matters which claimed his attention more fully. His speech on the Canadian Loans had attracted attention throughout the whole kingdom. He was half glad that the weight of the Experiment had been thus taken off his hands.

One fine morning in early May Henry Dubersly,

Marquis of Middleton, was found dead in his bed. His valet averred he had been awake the entire night, but that his lordship had expired without a sound. Harold felt instinctively that he had lost a friend and patron. He experienced loss by the hand of death the first time. Harold was then in his twelfth year.

When the will was opened after his lordship's death, it was found that he had judiciously made the bequest to the child of Chloe in the name of Inigo Bright, to be held in trust for the former at the nominal legatee's sole discretion. The rest of the estate went to his lordship's sister, barring a bequest of two thousand pounds "to the widow of John Holland (otherwise Mrs. Hope Walworth), lately departed this life."

In the autumn Harold was taken to London by Herr Felix for the first time. He was grown a fine lad. There was no sign of the intellectual collapse suggested by Mr. Albemarle Melton. He was quick-witted to a degree. It is a singular fact, however, that he rarely indulged in laughter. His broad brow would never have betokened the Ethiop. His hair, cut close, had a coarse, becoming curl.

Those who saw him wondered if it were not possible, after what had been done, to make his ebony skin white. Lord Shrewsdale, who viewed him again, declared on his oath that it would be no whit more remarkable.

After a season in London Harold returned to Dubersly, and the next few years were passed in the shadow of the manor, with scarcely an incident. Herr Felix never seemed to weary of his pupil, but

he was settling down into those mature German ways, proverbial with males of the Empire, after passing their thirty-fifth birthday.

Harold did not really emerge from his obscurity until he became of age.

Mr. Bright had planned a long continental tour for him, and, agreeably to this, he departed from the shores of his native land on the day following his twenty-first birthday.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Wherfore base ?

When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous and my shape as true
As honest madam’s issue ? Why brand they me
With base ? with baseness ?”

— *King Lear.*

DUBERSLY HOUSE, October 16, 188-.

DEAREST DANTHORNE : You cannot even imagine how glad I am to have gotten away from London at last. Of course it has been an uninterrupted round of pleasure—hobnobbing, as the expression goes, with dukes and earls, constancy to theatre parties and ball-rooms, and visits to places of interest, with absolutely no study. Yet it has all been so unreal, so unaccustomed and strange, that I have been in a semi-febrile state from the moment the whole nightmare began. And yet Mr. B. says I have comported myself admirably. He also compliments Herr F. on his talents as a dancing-master. I have not had time actually to think. Those eight months in London seem eight long years to me this bright autumn morning as I look back over them. Oh ! Danthorne, I know I have no right, after all that Mr. B. has done for me since my parents died, to be ungrateful, but sometimes I wish—I wish—I could meet and know a man or woman who did not wear a white skin. I suppose it is something within yearning for expression that impels me to mean and ungrateful thoughts sometimes. I feel

then, old fellow, that I would willingly give up half my fortune and education to be able to wash the accursed blackness out of my flesh. When in my more rational moods, however, I know that it is because I am not among my own people, or rather the people of my fathers, that I am thus affected. It seems trivial, perhaps, but the Queen of Hawaii, whom I met at the Earl of L—'s reception the other evening, seemed thoroughly happy and contented and not anxious to have any other hue than her own.

I wonder if it isn't vanity, anyway? Half the ladies in London cover their faces so insufferably with rouge, that they may have green or purple skins for all the rest of us know. You know, Danthorne, I am a thorough *Saxon*, and, after all, I don't suppose I'd be content, if I had any option in the matter, with even being white-skinned and black-whiskered, like a Frenchman; I should want a blond pate as well.

But why does F. keep me so confined in my knowledge of my father's race. To be sure, I know that he (*mon père*) was an Abyssinian gentleman and a member of the Abyssinian Parliament, who emigrated to England with my mother. She died shortly after losing him and when I was only six months old. I have read over and over again a book about Abyssinia that Mr. Bright gave me, too, and I cannot see that life there differs much from life in England. I fancy it must be pleasanter, because so few leave their country. Mr. B. fears, perhaps, that I should be seized with some romantic notion, *à la Prince Rasselas*, to leave England, because he tells me very little about my own fatherland. The other day I heard some-

thing about a great colony of black people (probably Abyssinians) in America, and when I asked about them further, the gentleman who was talking appeared embarrassed, and said he was but slightly informed on the subject.

Now, my dear Arthur, for a further confidence, for I know I can trust you. I dare not tell Mr. B., but a great change has just come over my life. I am terribly in love—yes, *in love* with the most charming woman I ever met. Her name is Mabel Vere, and I met her first at a reception which I attended with Mr. B. She is, besides, one of the cleverest girls in England, and took a mathematical prize at Oxford over the heads of the male wranglers. Everybody is talking about her. The whole of the first evening she did nothing but sit by me and talk mathematics and literature. It seemed so odd that she should have found the other people so stupid as to let me monopolize her until supper-time. I wonder if she knew how much I admired her. By the by, everybody appears to know me wherever I go in London. I suppose that is because I am the ward of Inigo Bright. I fancy many would be only too glad to change places with your very humble servant; but, to tell the truth, I never was very happy after leaving dear old Dubersly until I met Mabel Vere. I have seen her a dozen times since then (I could wish it a thousand), and each time she has been so kind to me and appeared to me so beautiful, that it has been as much as I could do, old fellow, to keep from falling down and telling her what was in my heart then and there—just, I suppose, as the hero-princes used to do in the

olden times (according to the fairy tales). Now I have left London, what am I to do ?—about Mabel Vere, I mean ? Would you advise me to tell Mr. B. first ? I suppose that would be the best course. But, then, I am quite sure that he has other plans for me—perhaps to have me espouse a woman of my own race. They may be a very charming people, those Abyssinians, but I don't think any of their women could ever be to me what Mabel Vere is. “*Fiddlesticks!*” you will say to all this. Nevertheless, I feel much better, now that I have told you all. I don't care if you *do* laugh at my presumption in thinking Miss Vere cares for me and make light of my passion. I think I know my duty, however, in spite of what I have said. You know I go on the continent in a couple of months. I think I wrote you to that effect in my last letter.

Well, my dear Danthorne, there is no news here at Dubersly to relate, so I may as well finish off this absurd letter without further ceremony.

Yours, as ever,

HAROLD BRIGHT.

ARTHUR DANTHORNE, Esq.

LONDON, November 3, 188-.

DEAR DANTHORNE : I wonder what it all means ! What is it you have been hiding from me ? I came up to London last week. I told Mr. B. that I intended calling on the Veres, and he told me that I must not. Why is it that I am not allowed to move about in the world except as a prisoner ? To be sure, I am not yet of age, but is he fearful that I will be

assassinated ? But enough of this. I met Miss Vere last night at a reception, and could contain myself no longer. At my very first words she turned so pale, and appeared—if I can bring my pen to write the term—horror-stricken ! It seems to me now that if some wild beast had sprung suddenly before her, the expression of her countenance could not have been so very different. It was at a dark end of the balcony, and the spot was deserted except by us two. I feared from her countenance that she was going to call for help. My blood almost froze in my veins as I saw her thus recoil from me. But as we approached the light from one of the conservatory windows her conduct changed, and I saw I had not been deceived when I believed Mabel Vere to be a thoroughly sincere and self-possessed girl. I need not tell you all she said, but she told me enough to make me understand that I had made a huge mistake. Her manner was all kindness and compassion, and I have no doubt she spoke sensibly ; but it angered and irritated me to such an extent that I was quite beside myself, and begged her for God's sake to stop. I saw her once again during the evening, and noted the peculiar expression of her eyes. She seemed to be lost in wonder, and regarded me with a mixture of pity and curiosity. I wonder myself if she thought me a doll or a waxwork to be played with and smiled at, as if human emotions were the last things in the world she fancied me endowed with.

* * * * *

I have begged my guardian to hasten the period

when my studies shall cease and I shall have departed for two years of continental travel. I trust it may be some time in January.

Adieu, my dear Danthorne, until we meet.

As ever,

H. B.

CHAPTER XII.

“ *Desdemona.* Well praised! How if (he) be black and witty?”

— *Othello.*

HAROLD BRIGHT was the first of his race to enter the brilliant Paris *salon* of Madame Salécy. He crossed the threshold with a step firm and graceful. It was natural that a murmur of astonishment should escape such an assemblage of wit, learning, and beauty. A similar phenomenon had not been seen in Paris for many a day. Harold’s bearing was aristocratic to the full. He made his entrance arm-in-arm with Arthur Danthorne, the playmate and friend of his childhood. Danthorne was well known to Madame Salécy’s circle, where his excellent good nature and his talents were quite as well appreciated as at the embassy.

To the right, as the two friends entered, stood a little group of four men, English with one exception. A tiny red ribbon adorned the button-hole of the exception, no other than the famous General Louis Legarde.

As Harold Bright and his friend Danthorne approached this group, one of the four started forward and shook the attaché by the hand. He was the youngest person in the present circle, if one might judge by features, complexion, and manner. He gave the impression of a *littérateur*. The others were lay civilians.

"Remington," exclaimed Danthorne, "let me introduce to you Mr. Harold Bright. Harold, Mr. Julius Remington, the author of 'Palaces Fair' and 'Herr Utopia,' undisputedly the books of the year."

Remington flushed at this fulsome compliment. He shook Harold's hand warmly. His two companions went through the handshaking part of the presentation with a sort of dazed courage. They had never done such a thing before ; it was like saluting their coachman. "*Mais, qui a peur ?*" they appeared to ask themselves ; evidently it was a case of "follow my leader."

The Frenchman grunted his astonishment when he heard Harold's name pronounced. His suspicions having been pointed toward a Haytian diplomat, it is almost unnecessary to say his sensibilities were little prepared for the impression of grace and dignity which the black made upon him. He stared, stroked his pointed beard, and bowed.

"May I ask if I am speaking to a Haytian ?" he inquired in French.

"I am an Englishman," Harold replied, simply.

It was the turn of the two civilians to stare.

What masquerading Ethiop was this, who had the impudence to call himself *Englishman* !

They felt inclined to laugh, but immediately repressed the inclination, and looked upon Danthorne's friend with extreme compassion. Remington appeared fascinated, an extraordinary interest which he essayed to hide by a commonplace remark addressed to his newly made acquaintance.

"Have you been many days in Paris ?" he asked.

“ I arrived yesterday with my comrade and tutor,” replied Harold. “ We are contemplating a year or two of travel.”

“ Indeed,” said Remington.

“ Mr. Bright is modest in setting forth his plans,” Danthorne hastened to say ; “ he is to bring all parts of three continents within his visionary scope—in turn. I can only add I envy him.”

During this colloquy General Legarde had recovered his voice and was about to speak. At this moment every head was suddenly turned, and Madame de Salécy was seen entering the room. A number of charming young ladies in ravishing toilettes accompanied her, among them being the famous Baronne Zweifollern, who chanced to preside over a *salon* of her own in Berlin. The eyes of Madame de Salécy roamed over the company, as if seeking for some one. The hostess was of medium height. Her hair was jet black and her complexion a pale olive. Her smile, distinctly feminine and winning, suffused a countenance that had much of imperiousness and high intellectual power. Her glance rested upon Harold Bright, and she swept rapidly toward him with her dazzling retinue. It was at this crisis that General Louis Legarde made a quick step forward with a glow of pleasure.

“ Ah, madame, c'est un plaisir—” he began.

“ À moi aussi, general,” interrupted the lady, coolly ; “ *mais, vous n'êtes pas le lion ce soir-ci. Voilà !* Have you met—pardon— Will Mr. Danthorne present me to one I already know ?”

It was a rule of Madame de Salécy's to hold and

not to attend receptions. Like a famous predecessor of hers, she often made advances to those whose society she desired to cultivate. In this case she was the one woman in Europe beyond the Channel who knew of this *protégé* of Lord Middleton's—this subject of the celebrated Inigo Bright. Perhaps she never forgot how near she once came to being Mar-¹chioness of Middleton.

With a turn for the same science and *experimentia* with which they had been animated, her curiosity was now elevated to the highest pitch. It was not to be disappointed. No courtier or cavalier of the times of Elizabeth or Louis le Grand ever rose more thoroughly or completely to the occasion. Harold even kissed her hand.

“I am flattered,” he said, with the most faultless accent—“flattered beyond my deserts; much more, madame, I feel sure, than my poor merit demands.”

This last phrase was spoken in such dulcet tones that everybody but Madame de Salécy took it for a compliment. Her quick wit detected a reproof, and she felt herself glow with enhanced interest.

“*Pas d'automaton*,” she thought, as she presented *le sable Anglais* to the company.

Le sable Anglais Harold forthwith became for a time. As for the poor General Legarde, he was overwhelmed with confusion. A portion of his embarrassment and chagrin may, perhaps, have rested in the fact of his recent return from Africa—a fact which may readily be recalled by an astute reader of the newspapers.

As for the ladies of the *salon*, they surrounded

Harold. Some admired his magnificent physique, which his immaculate, close-fitting attire served ill to conceal. Others delighted in his flow of language and his quick wit. His tapering fingers were an anomaly; his clear, sable complexion, his pleasing smile, his finely shaped head, and, above all, the uniqueness of the occasion proved an attraction like to no other which had ever graced the doors of Theresa Louise Marie Salécy.

“Est-ce réel,” whispered one young lady to another; “vous êtes sûr, ce n'est pas tout un chapitre de Gulliver?”

“And which are we,” returned her friend, gayly, “the giants or the pygmies?”

“Voilà! pour réplique,” laughed Mademoiselle Blanc; “are we not binding him fast with cords?”

“And the mistake of choosing dwarfs for giants,” broke in Madame Salécy at her elbow, having overheard the colloquy with a smile, “I never commit. Pygmies are never seen in my *salon*, n'est-ce pas?”

But, in truth, Madame Salécy, intrepid as she was, had felt nervous when she determined to greet Harold in public. Now mingled with her gratified surprise was naturally a feeling of profound relief. The novelty somewhat worn off, she left her guest to his own devices or those of his friends, and went to meet the captivating Signor d'Artli, who had promised faithfully to render several waltzes of his own imperishable composition upon the violin.

A new experience broke thus upon the horizon of Harold Bright, and one which he bore well and with equanimity. He took pride in thinking that his char-

acter was asserting itself. For the moment he forgot Mabel Vere. At supper, perhaps, he forgot her completely. He sat at the right of his hostess, and Madame Salécy monopolized his attention completely.

“Travelling is very romantic,” she observed. She purposely spoke in a loud tone that all might hear.

“Is it?” asked Harold, not unconscious that fifty pairs of eyes were fastened upon him. “For the first time, madame, yes; it is like a voyage of discovery. When one has read much of the travels of others it is merely like reading a play and seeing it acted.”

“The drama of travel,” laughed Madame Salécy.

“As for real voyages of discovery,” resumed Harold, “they are no longer possible. Now that Stanley and Livingstone have opened up Africa, every schoolboy can describe to you with irreverent familiarity all the nooks and corners of the once great unfathomable globe.”

Remington heard the remark across the table. It would have surprised Harold to be told how little he himself knew of the world to which he so glibly referred.

“And all the romance is gone,” said Remington, “the delicious speculation we used to attach to the tales of travellers.”

“Et le pauvre Capitaine Cook!” laughed the fair hostess; “must he stay at home?”

“Oh, no,” retorted Remington; “he can go to the North Pole!”

“And freeze to death,” growled M. Bristhoff, of the Russian Legation. “I detest romance. We of

the nineteenth century are not children to be amused with fairy tales. Thank Heaven, the writers of to-day are in a better business."

"So much the worse for the writers of to-day and us," broke in Harold, in his frank, boyish tones, and with a quick glance at Remington; "your realists are making the horizon of life smaller than it really is. This is a broad and a hale world, and every man is right to love the romance of others. I have heard it said our lives are never romances to ourselves."

The Russian coughed.

"Now, Tolstoi—"

"A narrow soul," exclaimed Remington, warmly; "one who has discovered a system of literary alchemy by which virtue is really turned into a synonyme for vice. This man deserves the distinction of being the greatest dupe of himself that ever lived."

"You entertain pronounced views, Mr. Remington," said Madame Salécy, after a general silence at that end of the table. "And what do you think of our M. Zola?"

"A tolerable photographer, madame. He points his apparatus at the Parisians, and they are delighted with the cold, flat, expressionless print. He does not paint. There is no warmth, no pulsating color in his works. Daguerre amused and startled them the same way. I prefer light and shadows and the warmth of color—in short, art. Zola is the first of a school, and attracted attention. Unfortunately that is the distinction he will leave to posterity. A horde is already following."

Madame de Salécy frowned a little. She did not

intend that Mr. Remington should monopolize the talk and denounce her favorites. She engaged Harold on the subject of the drama.

Then ensued a more or less diverting discussion on the merits of the various French and English dramatists, upon which theme Harold appeared especially at ease.

Upon the whole, Madame de Salécy was as much astonished at the breadth of her *protégé's* knowledge as she was at the vigor of his opinions.

CHAPTER XIII.

“Betwixt us and the crowning race.”

—TENNYSON.

HAROLD arrived at his hotel very late from Madame de Salécy’s. Walker, his valet, was ready to receive him and help him disrobe.

“Where is Mr. Felix?” he asked, as Walker began busying himself over his master’s discarded attire.

“Retired just this half hour, sir.”

This was the first time since Harold could remember that he had been left to return home unescorted by either tutor or guardian.

“Do you wish to be called in the morning, sir?” continued Walker, as his master signified his desire to be alone.

“No, Walker; I don’t think we have made any engagement before three. Good-night.”

The valet retired.

The season at Paris was as lively and as full of incident as any man could wish—even the most bored of London society people.

Before twenty-four hours had passed over the heads of the inhabitants of the capital Harold became a lion. Rumors concerning him had flitted from the Rue du Poires to the Champs de Mars, and flitted back again. *Figaro* christened him the Black Prince. The wits crowded in upon Madame de Salécy to inquire what Cassiopeia her *protégé* was seeking. Marvellous

flashes of wit and wisdom were attributed to him. It was “Have you heard?” and “The Black Prince has said it.” The children who saw him in the Champs got up brand-new fairy tales among themselves, in which *le prince noir* and *le roi Blackamoor* figured heroically. The professional comedians referred to him in their nocturnal sallies; the illustrated weeklies printed what professed to be his portrait. Could fame do more? No.

Out of *le monde*, one tenth of the Parisians who saw him in the Bois, dashing along on his natty English cob, believed him an Abyssinian nabob. The other nine tenths really suspected him to be a dandy of the faubourg, whose madman’s caprice had taken the form of blacking his face in order to get himself talked about.

Every day Felix Schonberg, as punctually as clock-work, entered an account of the day’s proceedings in a small volume provided by his employer, Mr. Bright, and which was subsequently to come under his inspection. Some of the entries which Herr Felix made at this time would have cost Harold a pang of humiliation had he known of it.

If the Experiment had remained long in Paris both might have come off with palled sensibilities. At last the shrewd tutor and companion perceived that Madame de Salécy was growing weary of replying to infinite questions relating to his charge. Six weeks had already elapsed. He decided that he and Harold should post off to Marseilles.

Harold had, in a very natural way, when one considers his manner of education, unconsciously fallen

into the habit of perfect acquiescence in all plans and propositions involving himself. Although he was now past man's estate and the legal possessor of a small fortune, it never once occurred to him to protest against the domination of one whom he knew to be a hired dependent, paid from his own funds. Felix Schonberg, on the other hand, had the common propensity of his countrymen to acquire ways from the nature of their surroundings and to grow set in those ways. He looked upon Harold very much as the product of his own handiwork, not altogether void of volition, perhaps, but with a will at all times subservient to his own. This arrangement had so far been satisfactory to both.

“The present is not the best time to visit Paris,” said Madame de Salécy, at parting with her *protégé*, “but I hope you have enjoyed yourself and found the Parisians hospitable.”

Harold could not have complained on that score. It would take a huge volume to relate the conversations and entertainments he participated in during his stay in the French capital. He had been present at a Presidential reception, where he met many distinguished statesmen. He had attended sessions of the Chamber of Deputies and conversed with the delegates. He went to the Théâtre Français to witness a new play by a master dramatist, and smoked a cigar with its author afterward. A renowned painter had begged for a sitting, and afterward presented Harold with a copy of the sketch he then made. In short, if he had not seen more of Paris than one tourist in a thousand does, he had seen much more of what was really worth seeing.

At Marseilles they stayed longer—two months (making frequent excursions into the interior)—in order to get a more perfect idea of France *sans* Paris, and also to acquire a knowledge of provincial customs. Thence to Cologne, Hamburg, Berlin. Here at Berlin the Reichstag was in session, and Harold encountered statesmen and warriors whose names were familiar words throughout Europe. The name, too, of Inigo Bright was a talisman which secured him everything.

The young and radical “rising hopes” of the German Empire especially interested Harold. They talked of politics as they would of a play. Bismarck was to them a great actor—a great artist. Several of these young persons condemned the whole piece incontinently. Some said it was a farce, others called it tragedy. The freedom of speech which they employed in discussing political affairs would be considered a liberal education by most young diplomats.

At a certain dinner given by the young Baron Stiltz, Harold and Herr Felix were present. This is the groove in which the talk ran on during the repast :

“ Depend upon it, this Leopold deserves watching. It is all very well for mein Herr Chancellor to pretend there is nothing intended but what appears on the surface. The King of the Belgians is too shrewd a man to throw away the crown millions for humanitarian purposes or speculatively on a patch of African territory.”

“ Why should he not ?” observed another young gentleman, in answer to the first speaker. “ It is because he is shrewd that he invests in fruits and

ivory. He has just as good a right as we or the English to appropriate the territory."

"Why did you not say better?" asked another, sarcastically. "What I want to know is, why should not Germany control Middle Africa as Great Britain controls Central India; why do all these colonial schemes of promise turn out worthless? You must be aware that the Emperor looks with distrust upon King Leopold, and thinks the Chancellor is to blame. And as for me, I think the Emperor is right."

"Oh! Leopold is up with the times. He believes wars of invasion and aggression are things of the past, and has gone in to conquer vast territory on a reform basis. That railroad of his will win the heart of every black-skinned savage in the interior. In a few years, my friends, Europe may be edified by the sight of an army of a million of d—d black niggers."

The young Baron Stiltz was on his feet in an instant.

"*Pardon!*" he said, meaningly, "but I hope you will not use that term again."

Every eye in the company, as if by magic, centred upon Harold Bright. A scene was expected, but the Experiment had not been paying attention.

Observing himself an object of the guests' gaze, Harold immediately jumped at a conclusion.

"What's up? Do they want me to make a speech?"

The speaker did not finish, and a murmur ran round the company which shortly afterward broke up. *Niggers! Qu'est-ce que c'est que cela?*

Pah! Harold Bright could make nothing of it.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ O Paradox ! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons and the scowl of night.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

HAROLD BRIGHT and his tutor spent some months abroad without having yet stirred beyond the boundaries of Europe.

One day an American entered the corridor of the Hotel di Continenti, at Nice, and approached the landlord’s office to transact some slight business. The host was engaged for the moment with another guest. With a polite gesture he begged the American to be seated. The latter acquiesced with equal politeness, but at that instant catching a glimpse of the third occupant of the apartment, he half rose in his chair, turned very pale, and directed a glance half of vexation and half of anger at the proprietor of the Hotel di Continenti. The proprietor was at a loss to interpret the demeanor of his guest, and assuming that he was taken suddenly ill, or that something extraordinary had transpired, left Harold, to remark solicitously :

“ Pardon, señor, but is there anything—?”

The American seemed too choked with anger for a moment to speak.

“ I thought—I understood you to say you were engaged !” he said, in a suppressed voice.

The other answered :

“ Dio grande ! But so I was, señor.”

“ But the guest ?”

“ The guest ! The guest ! Ah, I perceive, you have not met ! You—”

“ Sir,” exclaimed the American, “ this is an insult ! You must be mad ! Explain yourself—immediately !”

“ But—but, señor, I have nothing to explain.”

“ Order my baggage down immediately, sir !” exclaimed the other. “ I shall leave this house, sir !” Then he added : “ By God ! this insult shall cost you dear !”

“ *Insult ?*” gasped the bewildered host. “ But, señor—will not señor explain ?”

In answer the American deigned to point his finger at Harold.

“ Do you allow *that* to be a guest at this house and take precedence of a white man ?” he demanded—nay, almost shrieked.

Harold, at the first intimation that he was concerned in this outburst, sprang to his feet and gave vent to a natural exclamation of indignation and surprise.

A turbulent scene ensued, at the end of which the American demanded his account, duly followed his chattels to the street, and left the house.

Poor Harold, stunned, uneasy, bewildered, ascended to his apartments, heedless of the landlord’s apologies and the onlookers’ mute looks of inquiry.

* * * * *

An annual festival of the city of Nice is just about to begin. The streets are crowded with innumerable

shoppers and merrymakers, and the spirit of the approaching carnival already infuses itself into every one who stirs abroad. As has been traditional in Nice for centuries, all is laughter, license, and liberality, and the *lazzeroni* not only have the incredible effrontery to grin into the countenance of the prince patron, but the usual haughty demeanor of the entire aristocracy becomes softened into an aspect of indulgent and even jocular familiarity. Giggling maidens and children carry baskets of flowers through the narrow streets, or stand with them done up into fragrant nosegays on half the street corners in Nice, and everybody buys. Englishmen and Americans have apparently taken the city by storm. They swarm in and out of the hotels and villas, and promenade the squares and plazas brave in tweed suits and formidable walking-sticks, no longer, as of yore, the combined objects of wonder and terror to the native population. They quiz the flower-girls ; they throw pennies to the street gamin. The ladies of the foreign invasion ride about in barouches, and marvel at those perennial Italian characteristics—sunshine, color, and dirt.

Meantime, as these scenes are progressing without, the noise of a man pacing with heavy, erratic footsteps might be heard on the hotel balcony. Up and down—ceaselessly—up and down—for more than an hour. Immediately after the strange scene in the office Harold had gone direct to his room. His brain was literally on fire, and he felt the chamber small even to suffocation. This was the first time in his life that he had received a gross oral insult, and

brought up as he had been, it would have been difficult for any man to rally so directly as to be able to strike a blow or demand apology for the insult received.

In Harold's case, the indignity fell upon a mind already morbidly tortured by introspection.

Since the incident which happened at dinner in Berlin he had begun what was destined to be a long and painful course of sensibility. He fancied that he caught at meanings in the conversation of acquaintances which had none other than that intended, and began to be painfully alive to the fact that something was being persistently hidden from him by his companion, Felix Schonberg, and a great wrong done him by Inigo Bright. The encounter with the American pointed to a confirmation of all that he had vaguely feared. He flung out of the room with his brain on fire, and, not daring to trust himself in the street, began pacing the long, narrow balcony. This structure ran the entire width of the façade.

“ You infernal black nigger !” the American had ejaculated in his wrath ; “ what do you mean by addressing *a white man* ?”

The brutal words were as yet incomprehensible in their more sinister significance. Nevertheless, they seemed to have burned themselves into his brain. He, at first, began by repeating them over in a dazed sort of way, until he had exhausted their superficial import. Then he began to grapple with speculation. The assault had been entirely unprovoked. The American had appeared thoroughly rational and civil until his eye had fallen upon himself. Then, with

unspeakable disgust and indignation limned on his features, he had arisen and—

Harold grew deathly sick at heart. The restless shadow of doubt which had thrown itself across his path even before he had left England now assumed horribly fantastic proportions. He had sometimes wondered if he were not some horrible monster, tractable by education, but from which men shrank with loathing; that they did so, fearing contamination or doubting the stability of the change. If there was some ghastly mystery which hung over his life, he could not even in his calmer moments understand why Inigo Bright had caused him to leave England to suffer in spirit among strangers. To harden him through suffering? Why, then, did he not reveal the whole truth to him and let him accustom himself to ignominy?

Harold had his share of pride, and he knew that whatever he was, or in whatever light men might hold him, he was at least their intellectual equal and more often their superior. Perhaps he was the result of some physiological phenomenon, brought about by some shameful sexual agency. Perhaps—but no, it could not be! With his own vision he had seen men and women having black skins courted and apparently esteemed.

“*When you return,*” wrote Inigo Bright, “*I will explain all that which appears to trouble you. In the mean time, be patient.*”

God—be patient! It was well enough to say! Patient—under this terrible cloud of consciousness and awful feeling of isolation which sprang up about

him and entangled in a mesh his every step ! From what motive did Herr Felix clog his very thought and baffle all his attempts at self-enlightenment ? Looking back over his life, he became firmly convinced that Felix Schonberg *had* dogged and baffled him. He had done it kindly, smilingly, politely—what of that ? Could he not detect the veneer which made the truth appear all the grosser and more disreputable ? This action on Herr Felix's part was but the saccharine coating of a bitter pill. This pill he now choked in trying to swallow. Its bitterness sent a spasm of revulsion throughout the frame of the unfortunate child of Chloe.

Harold continued to pace with restless footsteps the piazza of the Hotel di Continenti.

He began to gaze more and more at the crowds below, at the merry jostling and idle chatter of the throng. No, not a single black face in all those passing people. *Black ! Black !*

Who am I ? What am I ? Whence do I come ? Granted he came of a goodly race, why—why had everything which could shed any light on that race been denied him ? Did Aladdin meditate on his good fortune ? Did Abon Hassan, pale and sensitive, sit wrapped in speculation when he woke up and found himself Caliph of Bagdad ? Did Christopher Sly grow melancholy because he was no longer a tinker ?

What were such fables to Harold Bright ? He wished to know the fatal truth as the moth thirsts for the light. The brutal language of the American seemed to make the whole world his insulters.

Absorbed in this merciless train of thought, Harold had failed to notice the small group which began gathering on a distant end of the balcony. It comprised mostly American ladies, as Harold could readily divine from their dress and manner.

Vaguely fearing some other maddening scene, he hastily repaired to his room. The one terrible necessity which had been present in his mind for months was confronting him at that moment. Herr Felix must throw off his pompous manner, his affectation of duty, and talk to him, man to man. From Felix he must have the truth, even at the risk of disobeying the unjust injunctions of the friend whom he had now begun to hate—to regard as his worst enemy.

“Now—now I am calm,” he soliloquized. “If I am *un sensitif* I have been made so by his training, by his conduct toward me. Perhaps I might have continued to live and enjoy myself, without a care for the causes and conditions of my existence, but it shall end—*now!* *now!* *now!* If I am a human hybrid, I swear to know it from his lips. If I own a race or nation, to that race or nation I shall go !

“God in Heaven pity me ! If I am gifted with a soul or am worthy of Thy handiwork, lend me aid. If I am not of Thy making, if my blackness is a brand more horrible than Cain’s, I pray—I pray that Thou wilt take my life and wilt crush me before I go mad among the beasts ! But the TRUTH ! *I will have the truth !*”

CHAPTER XV.

“ Fie, treacherous hue ! that will betray with blushing
The close enacts and counsels of the heart !
Here’s a lad framed of another leer.”

—*Titus Andronicus.*

It was right here that the observer might locate the fatal defect in the Experimentist’s dogma. If refinement of intellect is not innate, brawn is. To every infant born into the world a certain proportion of vitality is allotted, and the standard may never be raised. No organically puny child may be developed by any physiological process into a candidate for the prize-ring. One might as well say that the base-born colt can ever be trained to compete with and vanquish on the track the blooded race stallion. Brawn, in a word, is an inherent quality.

Robust vitalities, then, require lusty contact with the world. If the son of Chloe had been possessed of some way of dissipating his nerve force, of bruising his energies upon an occupation, he might still have retained his lightness of temperament. *On ne fait rien, observes the philosopher, et on se fait morbide.*

And one of the first things that occurs to the Experimentalist, as he now looks back over the field of his exploit, is that of the various races of men, the two most opposite to each other, Caucasian and Ethiopian, appear to possess the least capacity for

becoming morbid. If Harold, the Ethiop, had been born and bred among his fellows, even upon as high an intellectual plane as he had been bred, he would still have retained all that isolation of caste was now taking away. For the smile of the black is as proverbial as summer, and its fame extends over the universe. To show how far Harold had edged away from the common impulses of his kind, two years had elapsed in travel, and the slightest pretension to a smile now gave the black youth pain.

If Herr Felix had not been so engrossed in his observations and his books, he might at this juncture have seen something to give him a twinge of remorse. But the fact of the matter was, Herr Felix was engrossed in his books and observations, and, indeed, had of late carried himself with rather a high hand toward his charge. Ordinarily Harold would have mildly resented this change of demeanor, even in the face of the long and intimate relationship existing between the two. Herr Felix seemed a foster-father more than anything else.

Harold just now had no spirit to utter a single word of protest, but it nevertheless had seemed to him for some months as if Herr Felix had a secret and terrible rod in his keeping with which to smite him. He fancied his grim tutor knew of truths, held in abeyance only because no opportune moment appeared in which to cast them with damning might into his face. Daily Harold had grown to fear Herr Felix.

But to-day all this was past.

To-day, in his room, locked and bolted from within, he no longer felt the breath of fear. Harold mocked

at hesitancy. With temples that throbbed pitilessly he brooded over the everlasting secret of his birth and origin, the wornout plaything and relaxation of Inigo Bright. He went over all the old maddening conjectures until he felt the process maddening. Then Harold clapped on his hat and descended to the street.

On the sidewalk Harold encountered his tutor. Herr Felix was comfortably wrapped in an opera cloak, chatting with a couple of acquaintances. Several Frenchmen sat at tables sipping wine and listening to the music discoursed by a band stationed in the colonnade.

Herr Felix's tone was anything but respectful. It was not even polite.

"So, so!" he cried, sharply; "I thought you were upstairs and ill!"

"It was too close, and I decided to walk a little," replied Harold.

"But," pursued the tutor, in a peevish tone. "I am going to the opera."

"Then I hope you will enjoy it, sir." Harold took two paces forward.

"Harold, you must retire," called the tutor. "I went out because you assured me you were ill and did not intend leaving your room. How is this, sir?"

There was something about Herr Schonberg tonight that cut and angered the pupil. It may either have been in his tone or in his manner, or both.

"Come upstairs," said Harold, suddenly, yet respectfully. "Come upstairs, Herr Felix; I shall want you but a moment, perhaps."

Herr Schonberg excused himself to his companions with no very good grace, and followed his charge as he ascended the hotel stairs. The two entered the apartment — Harold's apartment at Nice — which neither were likely soon to forget.

“ Well ?” began the tutor.

Harold closed the door carefully, locked it from within, and placed the key in his pocket. Felix Schonberg sent one glance at Harold's eye and then quailed like a hunter, powerless before his intended prey.

“ What—what does this mean ?” he gasped.

“ Sit down,” replied Harold, in a low, repressed voice. “ I have much to say to you, sir—much to ask you.”

Then it was Herr Felix bounded to his feet as if shot.

“ Ask me ? Ask me ? Explain your conduct at once, Harold. Have I not always done my duty by you ? Have I not always been kind and attentive since you were a child ? You forget yourself. I will trouble you to open that door—immediately.”

The tutor was a well-built man. In his younger days he had been a capital fencer, an expert boxer, and a horseman of particular brilliancy, but he was no match for Harold Bright if a blow was to be struck. The threatening attitude of the tutor, his growing excitement, and his pupil's stubbornness, all betokened a collision of authority. Harold had promised Inigo Bright to place himself entirely subordinate to his tutor for three years. Herr Felix attempted to call Harold to what he deemed a sense of duty.

“Stop! Not another word!” interrupted Harold. “We cannot afford to lose time on petty recriminations. You must answer everything that I put to you at once. Do you hear me?”

“If I decline?”

“Then, by the living God above us, I will not be responsible for what I do!”

The look, the gesture, the tones of Harold’s voice were dramatic to a degree. Felix Schonberg turned a full shade paler.

“What do you wish to know? I was not aware that there was anything in my power to tell you that would call for such violence as this.”

“Pardon, Herr Schonberg,” said Harold; “I am excited, and your manner did not seem wholly friendly. Perhaps I did wrong in locking the door. See, I will unlock it. I will deal openly with you, but you must deal openly and fairly with me. First, who am I?”

Herr Felix became profoundly moved. He faltered, rolled his eyes about the room, and clenched his thighs with the palms of his hands.

“Tell me that which has been always concealed from me. Were my parents *black*? ”

Herr Felix faced the alternative. He saw nothing in the answer he might give which would offend his patron. On the contrary, the question seemed foolish and inane.

“Your father and mother were both as yourself. I don’t see what you are coming at. I was not aware that you ever troubled yourself on this account. There are many races on the globe—red, yellow, and

brown as well, and I was not aware that any of them ever sprang from white parentage."

Herr Felix's manner was now cold and taunting. He was much more at ease.

"Then, why," pursued Harold—"why have I never been informed about the race from which I sprang?"

"Informed—informed?" repeated Herr Felix, vacantly. He was busy resolving a suitable reply.

"Do not mock me!" exclaimed Harold, with passion.

He then related to Herr Schonberg the story of his encounter with the American.

"What do his words mean? Why did he shrink from me? Why did *she* shrink from me? My God! Why do you not speak? Speak and tell me why everybody is white and only I am black? Where are my people? Why can I not go to them, mingle with them, live with them? Something tells me that I am out of place. I yearn for the companionship of blood. Where are my brothers and sisters?"

Felix Schonberg retreated before the towering figure of Harold. The youth's appeal began fiercely, it ended with a frightful wail.

"Where are my brothers and sisters?"

Harold Bright seemed to plead before some stern, relentless tribunal for the return of the slaughtered dead. His hands moved convulsively and his whole frame betrayed the utmost excitement. Felix Schonberg was loath to say anything which would add fuel to his companion's passion.

"Speak! Speak!" shrieked Harold.

Felix found himself between two fires. While he was meditating thus, Harold, now in the height of his frenzy, struck him a slight blow. The tutor dared not return it. With white face and trembling frame he screamed loudly for help.

Harold ran from the room.

It seemed to him as if he had committed some deadly crime. The slightness of the blow went unconsidered. Felix Schonberg had been his tutor and companion from childhood, and the remorse he felt for the action could be likened to nothing so much as the remorse of a murderer who has smitten down a fellow-being.

When, repentant, he returned to the room, Herr Schonberg was gone. Where he had gone it was beyond Harold's reason to even surmise. To suppose for an instant, after what had passed between the two men, that Felix had carried out his original intention and gone to the opera seemed to him impossible.

As a matter of fact, Herr Felix had seen Harold on the balcony, and properly guessing that he would be seized with repentance for his action, had deemed it best to remain away and leave the youth to himself for the remainder of the night. Unfortunately Harold's experience of life had been too mild and peaceful for him not to put an exaggerated importance upon the assault. His lively imagination, heated by the day's indignity, subjected him to such torment that he made his mind up to return to England immediately. He would face Inigo Bright's displeasure rather than stay abroad another day.

Then came the thought of Mabel Vere, and with it

a train of morbid recollections, morbid hopes, and morbid fears. The influence of the American was still upon him, and without knowing what he did, Harold Bright decided that he would die before he would go back to London and Inigo Bright.

After all, was life worth living since Felix had so resolutely determined to tell him nothing concerning his birth and country ? With all his youth and health and vigor, such a thought made him revolt from it. Why not escape from it all and fly to America ? Harold seized at the idea with flushed face and throbbing temples. America ! America ! His race lived there ! There were black men in America ! If they were oppressed, he could succor them. Though they were ground down, he could at least suffer among his own.

Long before midnight the bird had flown. His plans were hasty, crude, and incomplete. His object was simply flight. All he knew was that he had enough money to pay his passage to America, and further than that he knew and cared nothing. The ticket agent at the Nice railway station was considerably startled at the sight of a well-dressed negro carrying a Gladstone bag, who inquired when the train for the north would arrive in pure English, and who bought a ticket for Havre. By consulting time tables and a copy of Galignani, Harold found that he could arrive in Havre four hours before a steamer would sail for New York.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ A toiling city thick with crowds
Then to his vision rose.”

—MELBOURNE.

It was a dull, cold morning.

A haze of autumn sleet was slanting on the great pier. Gangs of laborers ran about with ropes and planks. Officers were shouting, luggage was being tossed about, customs men were swearing, and two or three blue-coated guardians of the peace were holding in check a mob composed of the friends and relatives of the steamer's passengers. For their part, incessant handkerchief-shaking, eye-wiping, and brow-mopping. It was plain that everybody was literally on the tiptoe of expectation. A knot of handsomely attired women seemed to be dying of anxiety lest some husband, brother, friend, or lover should fail to recognize them among the throng. A group of actors elbowed their way to be the first to shake hands with a famous brother comedian who had won laurels abroad. Six tired-looking newspaper reporters stood inside the hallowed ground.

At this interesting juncture some one shouts :

“ Heave her off, there !”

This is closely followed by a

“ Haul her up, there !”

Whereupon the gang-planks are thrown open, and

over these tiny bridges the tide of humanity, pent up for a whole week and a half, swarms upon the pier. Faces are recognized, and if they are not handkerchiefs are waved with increasing vigor and desperation. This politician and that savant are recognized. The reporters rush eagerly forward to their prey.

By and by all are out. The bowels of the great ship are emptied of human freight. They certainly must be emptied.

But, no! Down the slender tendon which binds the huge marine monster to its native soil advances a well-knit, self-possessed figure. His face is black, but he does not seem an ordinary negro. Self-possessed, his every motion betrays complete mastery and determined resolve. He is dressed plainly, yet perfectly. In his right hand he bears a heavy Gladstone as if it were a toy.

The painfully acute representatives of a great and searching press start forward with all the enthusiasm of their craft.

The illustrious pugilistic light-weight champion of Tuppenny Corners is neglected.

Harold Bright does not try to restrain a smile—the first he has known for weeks. Not altogether a stranger to this experience, he has determined to say nothing. The inquisitiveness of the scribes redoubles each moment, but Harold only smiles.

The New York newspapers consequently announce the following morning that a distinguished Haytian—Liberian—Abyssinian diplomat—scholar—traveller has landed on American shores.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Great is the justice of the white man—
Greater is the power of a lie.”

—R. KIPLING.

ARMED with such slight information as he had acquired from the stranger at the dock in Havre, Harold engaged a vehicle and drove directly to the Manhattan Hotel. The time in the vehicle he employed in gazing out of the windows at the buildings and the crowds. Hurried along in this lively manner, his spirits, not unnaturally, rose at the prospect of being loosed from the thraldom of thought. For the first time in many months he experienced a pleasant and real buoyancy. He felt that, given the opportunity, he could set hands and brain to work in his new sphere with a will. Thoroughly confident of himself in this way, he reached the hotel and alighted from the cab. When he paid the driver, the action recalled him at once and with something of a shock to the paltry state of his finances. Just at present, however, there was little time for pondering. As he entered the hotel, with its long corridor filled with loungers and lighted with gas jets even in the daytime, an Irish porter immediately laid hold of his valise, without even the preliminary of setting eyes upon its owner. Harold walked briskly up to the clerk’s desk without attracting very much attention and demanded a room.

"I shall want to occupy it at once, if you please," he added, in a decided sort of way.

The clerk stared as if he had not heard aright or could scarcely credit his senses. Harold cast one glance upon him. He felt his heart sink. It reminded him so much of the glance of General Louis Legarde.

"How's that?" asked the clerk, laying down his pen and then taking it up again.

Harold repeated his request.

At this interesting juncture a slim, reddish-haired young man, wearing eye-glasses, leaned over the counter and whispered something in the clerk's ear. The clerk laid down his pen again and stared. Having done this for the space of a full half minute, he retreated some distance behind the glass door of a compartment labelled "Manager's Office," from whence shortly issued a stout, portly gentleman, who attended to Harold's case in very short order.

"I'm extremely sorry—extremely sorry, indeed," he explained, suavely, "but the house is full. Yes; you see, the house is full. Of course," he added, "there are three or four rooms, but they are reserved for old patrons, whom we are expecting every moment."

Whereupon the manager smiled, nodded, rubbed his hands, and retreated. Two or three guests smiled, nodded, and winked at his retreating figure. Apparently they enjoyed this colloquy immensely. Harold's chagrin left him courage but wherewith to ask :

"Can you, then, direct me to a hotel?"

The clerk hesitated. Then a happy thought struck him.

“ Try a few doors further up,” he said.

* * * * *

It was a bitter experience.

Five hotels in quick succession Harold entered and retreated from with no better success. Once or twice he got ugly looks that were yet less insulting than the lies—lies accompanied by satirical blandness and a smile. He saw other strangers enter and register on the hotel’s book in an offhand way, and knew that the functionaries spoke no truth to him. But what could he do ?

A stranger in a great city must first have food and lodgings ; it is his first step toward gaining a foothold. Harold was black, and was denied that. What would the sensible man and present reader do under such circumstances ? People eyed him askance on the street, and not a few stared at him with a broad grin traced upon their faces.

Harold had left his satchel at the hotel he had first entered. In retracing his steps over the crowded, muddy thoroughfare, he came across a little park. In it were a series of wooden benches, and upon one of these the son of Chloe seated himself and sunk his head heavily upon his upraised palms. The terrible despair of that moment was relieved by nothing in past—or future. All his remembered joys had sickened and died on his hands, and his cup of bitterness was full. Not a single ray of hope illumined the gloom of that awful moment !

But in the midst of a mute appeal to Providence

for succor, he chanced to raise his eyes, and lo ! the figure of a stalwart negro as black as himself appeared through the trees lining the path. He was rapidly approaching, and had a good-sized paper parcel tucked under each arm. Harold's first impulse was to dart forward, explain the situation, and beg for the man's assistance. Surely one of his own color would not refuse him. Nor was he mistaken. But his nervous haste and extreme excitability of countenance nearly sent the other negro into convulsions. He dropped one of his packages, and appeared strongly in favor of taking to his heels.

“ Yo' mos' scared me to death,” he explained, “ comin' at me like that ! Ef yo'll come with me, Mister L'Heureux 'll be right pleased to see you.”

Harold cheerfully accepted his offer, and together they crossed the park.

“ I s'pose yo' won't mind waitin' after I shows yo' the place, will yo' ?” observed the negro, whose name was Cassius White ; “ believe Mister L'Heureux ain't liable to come home befo' five, and it ain't only three now.”

Harold started and took out his watch, which his companion eyed admiringly.

“ Good God ! I can't believe it ! I must have been sitting in that park for hours !”

Such moments of despair rarely come but once in a human lifetime. It is a stupor that overwhelms time itself as it overwhelmed Harold, so that the hours fled by unheeded. Even now, in the company of Cassius, he merely remembered boarding a yellow-painted caravan, of answering some questions which his com-

panion quite respectfully put to him ; he remembered alighting before a rather cheerful house of red brick ; he remembered being greeted by a dark-skinned woman, of being very sleepy, and of being shown to a room by a man whose hand he clasped.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ ‘The curse has come upon me,’ cried the Lady of Shalott.”

THIS L’Heureux turned out to be a slender, well-proportioned man of thirty, whose clear, saddle-colored skin was not his least attraction. He had a countenance which was prepossessing, earnest, and sincere, and his bearing closely resembled that of a gentleman.

L’Heureux took Bright’s arm cordially the next morning and led him in to breakfast, without making any very personal inquiries concerning his guest’s presence in the family. For his part, during the progress of the meal, Harold learned that his host was an editor and a philanthropist. When the repast was concluded (and Harold ate but little), L’Heureux led the way to the office of the newspaper published in the interests of his race, of which he was proprietor.

“ It is so much better to walk on a cold morning like this,” he observed, briskly, as they passed well into Broadway. “ I find it invariably puts me into a better frame of mind. I can also write a great deal better.”

Harold felt his spirits returning with the walk.

“ Your buildings are very fine,” he remarked, admiringly, of the great iron and marble façades which line the greatest thoroughfare in the world. The two

enatted in commonplace fashion until City Hall Square was reached, and L'Heureux led his companion across.

Harold felt again a sensation of pleasure stealing over him for the second time since his landing. The duties and accountabilities of life had never seemed so real as when now he gazed upon the hurry and scurry and bustle of mankind, and felt that he, too, might in this new world add his own zephyr to the whirlwind of occupation and progress. Wending their way through crowded Nassau Street, the editor of the *Freeman* suddenly wheeled down a side thoroughfare and brought up before a low brick building covered with white paint, one of the few remaining sometime aristocratic mansions of a departed century. L'Heureux looked Harold in the face and smiled. "There we are," he said ; "this is my fortress. Not very pretentious, but still, if you take it all round, a genuine marvel."

So saying, he again took his companion's arm and mounted two pairs of dark, dingy stairs. When near the top a door with a glazed glass window was hastily thrown open, and a black youth called out :

"Good-morning, Mr. L'Heureux. We are in a hole again. Neither of the compositors has put in an appearance!"

"Very well, Norman. Let me introduce my assistant—Norman Fletcher, Mr. Bright."

The young men shook hands warmly. Fletcher was many shades of complexion lighter than Harold and at least two years younger.

"Now what is this?" resumed L'Heureux, when

all three had taken chairs. "No printers again? It was that turkey raffle, Norman, depend upon it."

L'Heureux turned to Bright and explained how his assistants, who were usually employed in type-setting for the paper, were addicted to periodical absences for two days at a stretch. "This is one of the greatest annoyances I meet with," he said, with no trace of annoyance, however, either in face or manner. "No printers, no paper. That is the alternative in the greatest newspaper office in the world. But we, being the smallest, perhaps, are not bound by any such rules. We are often obliged to be both printers and editors. Come, Norman, how many columns do we lack?"

"Seven, and we go to press to-morrow."

"Have we the leaders up?"

"Yes, sir—that is, I think so. Here are a number of clippings to be set."

L'Heureux ran his eye over the proofs.

"Let me see, 'The Blair Bill,' 'Southern Senators and Northern Sentiment,' 'Mr. Douglass's Error,' 'An Appeal to the Bayonet'—why, that is only four. We must have six at least."

"There is the Mahone incident."

"No; I have promised not to allude to that further. What else?"

Norman picked over a pile of exchanges.

"Mr. Marsh dropped in this morning to explain about the colored organization in the Ninth Ward. He says the *Freeman* ought to make a retraction."

"Marsh is an idiot, a 'no-account.' Such colored organizations as his are bound to retard progress in-

stead of promoting it. Every nigger with a little schooling got late in life wants to get up clubs and societies. If Marsh thinks I am wrong, let him prove it. I won't retract a word."

L'Heureux had by this time doffed his coat and rolled up his sleeves preparatory to work. During the above outburst he seemed to get a little warmed up, and for the moment forgot Bright's presence.

"I can't help getting angered at these local politicians," he said. "You will learn about them to your sorrow, Mr. Bright. They spoil all our better plans. They organize when organization will only injure us. Negro politics have no place in the North, except to excite unjust prejudice."

To Harold this talk seemed like so much jargon ; he was engaged in minutely observing the walls and furnishings of the place. The office consisted of two low-studded rooms adjoining each other, one of these being used as the composing and press room. An old-fashioned roller printing-press stood in one corner. The other apartment, the one in which he sat, was rather cosey-looking, plenty of heat being diffused throughout from a stove placed in nearly the centre.

A small but generously filled bookcase was fastened to the wall beside the editorial desk. Another and smaller desk stood in another corner near the window, of which latter conveniences there were two in either apartment. The walls were liberally covered with frames. Many contained portraits of illustrious men connected with the abolition of slavery—those, for instance, of Lincoln and Sumner and Phillips ; but the most striking objects were printed placards in

large display type, which could be read at the utmost distance to which an occupant of the chamber could recede. L'Heureux explained :

“ That, I should tell you, is an extract from Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' Those are the closing words of President Lincoln's Gettysburg speech. Oh, you have heard that ! Here is the Fifteenth Amendment entire. Over there I hang up what I call my inspirations. They, too, are mottoes. Can you read them ?”

Harold Bright read them. Then he turned and looked L'Heureux straight in the eye for a full minute. So intense was the glare, that it seemed as if he were about to spring and pin him down to the floor. L'Heureux returned his gaze, silent, but inwardly marvelling. The visitor first spoke, saying with enforced calmness :

“ I told you but little last night, L'Heureux ; perhaps what I have yet to tell may astonish you beyond your—yes, even my own belief. But tell me—I am ignorant as a child—do you hold such doctrines as that *true* ?”

Intelligence instantly spread itself over the features of L'Heureux. The other was pointing wildly to a great placard on the wall.

“ THE GREAT TRUTH,” it ran, “ THAT THE NEGRO IS NOT EQUAL TO THE WHITE MAN ; THAT SLAVERY, SUBORDINATION TO THE SUPERIOR RACE, IS HIS NATURAL AND NORMAL CONDITION. THE NEGRO BY NATURE OR BY THE CURSE OF CANAAN IS FITTED FOR THAT POSITION WHICH HE OCCUPIES IN OUR SYSTEM, AND BY EXPERIENCE WE KNOW THAT IT IS BEST NOT ONLY FOR THE SUPERIOR, BUT FOR THE INFERIOR RACE THAT IT SHOULD BE SO. IT IS, INDEED, IN CONFORMITY WITH THE ORDINANCE OF THE CREATOR.

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.”

"Do you mean to tell me those sentiments are new to you!" exclaimed the editor of the *Freeman*. He was silent for a moment. "It is not strange," he added. "You are a European. But, tell me, have you read nothing of our race wars, our race discussions, our race polemics?"

"So little, that I traversed the wide Atlantic to learn. All my knowledge of my caste is instinct. I have been born and bred in a dense mist. Every road has been opened to me but that leading to my origin and my—color."

L'Heureux was so amazed that he forgot to reply. Harold's eyes suddenly filled with tears.

"It seems strange, does it not? That is because I am educated and drilled in the ways of the polite world. I fear I know but little of the real world. But," he said, with an effort, "you have not answered me."

"I'm afraid I can't now. You would not understand. The sentiment you see on that wall inspires me, because it tells me what my race and yours has yet to perform *before it can brand its distinguished author an ineffable liar.*"

It was L'Heureux's turn to be moved. He set his teeth closely together for a moment. Quickly collecting himself, however, he begged his companion to divert himself while he busied himself at the printer's case.

Norman Fletcher, who had gone out during colloquy, returned now with an armful of letters and newspapers, which he disposed in order on the desk, and forthwith withdrew, also to the adjoining room.

Harold, thus left to his own devices, took down a number of volumes from the book-shelf at his elbow and skimmed them over with nervous curiosity. Several hours passed while he was thus engaged before L'Heureux professed himself at leisure. This he did as the mighty bell in the adjacent tower of Trinity Church struck one, upon which both men descended for lunch. The editor of the *Freeman* informed Harold that he usually lunched at a little German restaurant around the corner, where they could sit and chat unobserved. Bright found it a rather pleasant, snug place, situate in a cellar, above which rose a massy pile of buildings. The restaurant was resorted to by clerks and the needier class of professional men. Here, after they had been comfortably seated and partaken of a light luncheon, both being too much occupied to have an appetite, the son of Chloe told his curious history. Throughout the narration he maintained a quiet dignity and refinement of manner that astonished L'Heureux, even after he had become undoubted master of the causes which produced it. When it was all through there was silence between them for several minutes.

“What did you write your benefactor?” asked L'Heureux.

“This,” and Harold repeated almost word for word that which he had posted in the heat of his emotion at Havre. “I know I can trust you,” he said to L'Heureux.

“You can, you can,” reiterated the other, grasping Bright's hand and holding it with an almost fatherly affection. “Perhaps it is better not to seek to un-

ravel the mystery of the man who has made you just what you are ; but I fancy it is plain even now to both of us. Under the mask of some mortal caprice, God Almighty has snatched one from the ranks of our kind to mix, mingle, and enjoy with the master race. You are surely destined to some great good to our race. Unwittingly you have imbibed every feeling, every sensation, every noblest sentiment which seventeen centuries of domination have bequeathed to the white man ; consequently you are the equal of any Caucasian that breathes."

" But is that—is that remarkable ? "

L'Heureux paused a moment.

" Yes ; you are the first negro in all the billions of souls included in the whole of modern civilization to enjoy the atmosphere and the privileges of the white man ! "

It would be difficult to convey the force and earnestness with which the speaker uttered these words.

" As for me," he said, " I can tell my story in a few words. My grandfather was a French slave transported to the French colonial possessions. He was killed early in the insurrection of 1812, when my father was a child in arms. When he grew older he shipped as a marine on board a man-of-war, and was captured by the English and sold to a broker in cotton down in Charleston. The broker made him his body servant and treated him kindly for twenty years. During this time he married and I was born. Then the master died. My father was seized by a planter for a pretended debt, and was made to work as a common laborer in the rice fields. Although my mother was

a free woman, she was not permitted even to see him. One day he wrote my mother a letter to leave at once for the North, as he intended to escape. But he was caught out at sea in an open boat and shot dead while swimming away from his pursuers."

"And all this is *possible?*" gasped Harold. He had been drinking in every syllable of L'Heureux's narrative.

The latter smiled bitterly. "I forgot. You are positively ignorant of the beauties of race slavery. But this is a merciful instance. Taken all in all, the lives of both my progenitors were far above the ordinary standard of negro happiness."

During the next few days Harold Bright lived in a vague, unreal world. He appeared scarcely to think. He dared not trust himself even in thought. He could only deem it, in a vague sort of way, some horrible dream from which he would soon awaken. He went through the introduction to others of his own race half-unconscious of what he said or did. L'Heureux was only too happy to befriend him. He used to argue that a generous Providence had put it in his power to do so. He thought he knew and appreciated the full extent of Harold's sufferings. He felt, too, that it would be but temporary, and when he recovered his wonted vigor of mind Norman Fletcher would have returned to college, and the cause of the black man would find a unique and fitting champion in Harold through the columns of the paper. Colored men read and reasoned more now. The colored vote was gaining in independence with every year. The

black man's wrongs were to be righted ; new and more glaring injustices appeared. The process of self-education was bringing its results. Everything pointed to a future potency for the *Freeman* of which, in his most sanguine moments, when he began it, L'Heureux had scarcely dreamed.

And so the son of black Chloe lived and moved and had his being for weeks in a sort of trance. His chamber overlooked the street, and at its window he sat and mused many a night when L'Heureux believed him asleep. He could no more have closed his eyes than he could have altered the color of his skin.

Christmas time came—those days in which he was wont to make merry in the old manor at Dubersly—to find L'Heureux and his wife talking him with might and main into a more cheerful and rational frame of mind.

Sarah L'Heureux was an intelligent negress, some years younger than her husband. She was ambitious, attractive in her manner, and at times even of a satirical wit. Her figure was good and her face was certainly not unpleasing. This woman's father was a New Orleans creole, who had married a full-blooded Ethiopian girl, paying for her ransom along with the wedding fee. Mrs. L'Heureux was looked up to, therefore, as a social leader among the better classes of the blacks of New York. She had a small fortune of thirty or forty thousand dollars in her own right, and her husband's property was not inconsiderable. During the winter season a great many worthy and even distinguished men and women of their own race graced the L'Heureux abode. Sarah L'Heureux gave balls and

parties, at which black members of Congress had been known to figure. And this was not all. The visitors to the house in Tyler Street were not all branded with the curse of Canaan. Their faces were not all of a Cimmerian hue. Some of them were politicians and stood high in public esteem. They did not deem it any infringement of those iron-clad rules of caste, which had been drawn up from time immemorial, to cater to the thousands of suffrages, which these, their inferiors, represented. L'Heureux was a powerful factor, they knew, and L'Heureux found it agreeable not to receive their advances with disdain.

"It is true," said he, on one occasion, "we wear our blackness on our faces, but it is a better way than theirs, who wear it in their hearts."

The social principle recognized by the L'Heureux was simple. They and their friends were fain to let the two races go their respective ways. There was to be no truckling on the one hand, no patronage on the other. The shade of caste color nearest perfection was the somberest. Miss Troup, who was an octoroon, did not take precedence over Miss Burton, whose complexion was a jet and glossy ebony. As few standards of taste as possible obtained from the whites were tolerated.

But it must not be supposed from this that there were no degrees of castes within a caste. The inhabitants of Ludlow Street were as much elevated above the heads of the denizens of Thompson Street as the citizen of Walker Alley and the Chelsea Flats was below the resident of Anne Terrace or the purlieus of Oxley Square. As for the L'Heureux mansion, it

was besought by the whole negro social organization.

L'Heureux and his wife had dipped pretty deep into the lore of their recent masters, but not enough to make them affect a scorn of religion. Both were highly devout, and members of a flourishing African Episcopal congregation. On this particular Christmas Eve they had made great preparations for observing the day with gladness and propriety.

Harold watched these preparations with a strange and wistful sadness in his heart. The bits of evergreen fastened about the walls recalled to him the days when he had the ignorant and presumptuous folly to believe himself the equal of Arthur Danthorne and Robert Langley and other of his youthful playmates. But those days were gone. It behooved him now to cast the dead and dried leaves of the past to the four winds and seek for fresh, new blossoms in a future career. He had gathered the old posies with pride in his heart. He had been led to believe they would last forever. The man who had willed all this ignorance for him was a great and dear friend, whom he now had thrown off and alienated. The shock of knowledge, of course, was great. It is no wonder he suffered from it. It is not hard to fancy a man waking up after a night of pleasant dreams to find both legs severed from his body. Or for the ruler of a kingdom suddenly to make the discovery that he was nothing, after all, but a hod-carrier. But the cripple must soon become accustomed to his maimed state. The hod-carrier must get to his work early in the day, just like the other hod-carriers. And he might yet

be a great, distinctive carrier of hods. A kingly hod-carrier is yet a distinction worth living for. How much better than one of a dozen hod-carrier kings, who manage to pitifully disfigure the pages of history !

“ We have invited a great many people to-morrow, and you really should be in good spirits and help us entertain them.”

Harold thought this a small favor in return for all those he had received. He replied to his hostess as gallantly as if she had been Mme. Salécy herself and he in her spacious *salon*.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ No face is fair that is not full so black.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

By nine o'clock the next evening the house was full of the best people. We live in a relative world : to themselves the blacks of New York were the acme of wit and exclusiveness. The interior of the front parlor was adorned with holly and evergreens. Several branches of mistletoe peeped from underneath the blazing chandelier. Out of the thirty guests of the L'Heureux, twelve were full-blooded negroes. Some hailed from the city of Brooklyn and adjoining towns, where they had built themselves up a certain regard as persons of responsibility. Among these was a war fugitive from Georgia, who had apprenticed himself to a druggist to slave in the laboratory. He had eventually mastered the business and set up an establishment for himself. Another was a real estate agent, who, from being patronized solely on account of his skin, had invited patronage because of his business abilities and his probity. He was said to be as shrewd as a Jew. Both of these men had married of their own race, if not of their own hue, and had given birth to children of both sexes.

After the ceremony of introduction was over Harold found himself in a little coterie composed of his hostess, one Peter Johnson, his wife, and Angela

Hyde, the daughter of a Harlem house builder and contractor. Miss Hyde was the only black young woman in the assemblage. The difference between her and the mulattoes and quadroons was strongly marked. She laid no pretence to conversational ability, but managed to play several airs on the piano acceptably. Strange as it may seem, she courted Harold's attention very assiduously, yet Harold felt no emotion but that of repugnance toward these advances. In person, Miss Hyde was of the full-lipped, flat-nosed, frowzy-haired type, and was really considered by those who looked from an Ethiop's coign of vantage the belle of the evening.

Peter Johnson, on the other hand, was a mulatto, and his wife a remarkably handsome quadroon. Mr. Johnson was a lawyer and a remarkably well-educated man, "as sharp as a knife, sah!" as one of the company remarked confidentially to Harold. The remainder of the *ensemble* was more or less demonstrative and in general keeping with the type of American men and women of color who have mixed much with the white man.

The conversation first ran on the individual healths of the party. Some averred they were feeling but "poorly," and there seemed to be no intervening or qualifying condition. The remainder were feeling "first-rate." Then talk on the weather and church matters was in order, and by degrees dress and edibles were appropriately discussed. Then some one gave the signal for dancing to begin, and every eye appeared to glisten as if by magic. The negro of every caste dearly loves dancing. Harold discovered that

the circle in which L'Heureux and his wife moved was not a theatre-going class ; that the higher temples of the drama were practically closed to them. Theatre parties were an impossibility.

"I only go to the theatre rarely," observed Mr. Johnson. "In fact, I don't care much for it. You can't tell whether the man who sits next to you isn't going to kick up a row or your wife get insulted. It spoils all the enjoyment you get out of it. As soon as we colored people have a theatre of our own I'll go oftener, perhaps."

Ordinarily the blacks were very fond of the drama. Harold refrained from dancing, but sat chatting with the negro druggist and L'Heureux. He learned that Johnson was an accomplished story-teller and full of reminiscent anecdotes of his personal history and travels. For Johnson was born in Alabama, and had been carried North when a mere child as the private page of a Congressman, who had educated him and afterward had taken him abroad, after receiving an appointment as Spanish consul.

Thus Johnson had had more than natural advantages, and was consequently enabled to even separate himself at times from his race, and even to look at society and politics from the broader plane of the white man.

This was the field in which Harold Bright now resolved to cast all his energies and talents.

CHAPTER XX.

“ Did not thy hue betray whose brat thou art,
Had nature lent thee but thy mother’s look,
Thou might’st have been an emperor ! ”

— *Titus Andronicus.*

MONTHS, even years, sped on with Harold.

It has now grown to be the middle of summer. The plants and flowers growing by the wayside exude their accustomed fragrance. The fragrance mingles with the sunlight. Above, the white clouds soar and seem cool. Hundreds of feet below the Hudson glides pompously toward the sea.

The boughs of the trees which overhang a path leading to the summit of the Palisades are of a sudden brushed aside to permit a dismounted horseman to lead his animal on to a given point. The animal is secured by its bridle to the trunk of a stout maple.

The figure is Harold Bright’s, clean shaven, a little older, and with strange, grayish fibres in his jet hair. Still, only a very few years have elapsed. The animal Harold has just secured is a livery hack he has ridden up from Hoboken. He has a mare of his own, but Bess, as he calls her, is a trifle lame from a fall, and the difficulty of ferry-boat conveyance back and forth across the river usually spoils the day’s enjoyment of the outing tourist. Horse and man are at present upon a little open, right on the brink of the

cliff—a smooth, grassy spot, with a huge rocky ledge projecting above the surface, and cut by nature's hand into a model seat from which to view with comfort and serenity the scene spread out below. It is not grand, it is not majestic, this view of the Hudson from the Palisades, but it is supremely beautiful, witching, fascinating, and exquisite, an euphemist would say. The vernal woodland on the eastern shore, dotted with towns and dwellings, seems too miniature to be real. It is like a scene from toy-ville and tinsel-land: the trees are of fragile tissue, and the houses are the pudgy, German painted blocks familiar to childhood; the clouds which overhang them are puffs of pipe-smoke—nothing by any possibility can be real. It only needs the grave-faced urchin to come stalking in with his mouth full of raspberry tart, to knock the whole community over, and pack it up in his Noah's ark.

Harold, having tied his horse, pushed the ivy aside and seated himself on the rock. Twenty feet away, to his right, a chasm had been formed lengthwise, and the front of the cliff became a sort of outer wall wooded with firs. Across this crevice a slender bridge had been thrown by the owner of the estate, who had built himself a mansion for his summer enjoyment further back among the trees. On the summit of this natural wall was a tiny observatory and a bed of bright flowers. It was the sole touch of color in the foreground of the picture Harold thus revelled in. The day was uncomfortably warm to the world below, but here a cooling breeze was blowing, and sitting in the shade of the flourishing maple which reared its

trunk just beside his stamping ground, Harold drew out his pipe, filled it with tobacco, and stretching his feet until they rested on an ivy hammock, at the base of the rock, luxuriously drank in the scene through the curling cloudlets of Cavendish. What a pity the mind could not always separate itself thus at will from the clodden smallness of life ! he thought. Why can we not mount above the pettiness of the world without such purely physical accessories as a pair of legs and the capacity for climbing up a few paltry feet of inclined ground ?—which, by the way, the geographers tell us, is merely a grain of sand on the earth's surface.

“ Ah ! yes ; this is the life I ought to lead,” Harold said to himself—“ a quietly contemplative existence. Leave all the humdrum of a world in which such as I have no place and live like this always. I could easily do it in a few years. I could write my way to success, if all publishers were in duty bound to accept.”

Harold thought with a glow of satisfaction of his literary success, of the marked cordiality with which his lucubrations had been received by newspaper and magazine editors in the metropolis. They thought him a novelty—a monstrosity in letters, perhaps, but what did he care for that ? They had done so well by him that he took no salary from L'Heureux, but had allowed it to accumulate as stock in the *Freeman*, which more than prospered in these days of problematical agitation.

It was while ruminating this way that Harold heard voices, seemingly close at hand. The voices he soon found proceeded from a group of children, laughing

forerunners of a picnic party. It was just the day for a picnic and this was just the spot. Shielded as he was by rock and tree, Harold remained unobserved as the party, which apparently consisted of three or four ladies and a dozen or more children, proceeded to emplace its hampers, parasols, and various other belongings in picturesque confusion upon the summit. Forty feet from the ledge the children prattled and played games, in which latter diversions the women joined by turns. The sound of the voices could readily be distinguished, and at times, as they sat knitting and crocheting apart, whole sentences of their conversation drifted over to Harold.

Two hours passed by, and the black had fallen into an ecstatic doze, when a slight noise caused him to reopen his eyes lazily. Before him, a few feet distant, was a child of about five—a boy—with crisp golden curls, that reflected the sunlight and made a yellow fringe about his dark-hued Tain o' Shanter. He was busy plucking the daisies from their stalks, and occasionally a fluffy, superannuated dandelion, which he paused long enough to blow into a million feathery atoms. Harold contemplated the child with varied emotions. He was no longer drowsy. His fanciful mood this sunny afternoon led him to surround the youngster with a tinge of romantic interest. As he watched the tiny, bending figure and listened to the winning prattle, he wondered why he could not have remained such a one in the old, old days at Capenhurst. He wondered if this child ever thought of the inestimable blessing God had bestowed upon him in making his skin white, and what there could

be in the future to set itself as a barrier across that young life. He tried to weave a future for him as he lay there propped up against the rock, shielded from the sun's rays. His life would doubtless be one of content. Passing over his school-days, at twenty he would naturally fall in love, and being well-to-do and handsome, that love would probably be returned with interest. This subject of love naturally led Harold's vagaries back over the path of his own experience and to thoughts of Mabel Vere. As he did so he clasped his hands together suddenly and bitterly. The boy, who had been straying dangerously near the edge of the precipice, was immediately attracted by the noise. He turned his chubby face, expecting to greet an anxious sister or a laughing playmate who had come back to restore him to the group. There was a pretty smile on his lips, and his big blue eyes stared roguishly from under his cap. At that instant he caught sight of the black, who, alarmed for the child's safety, had started up and turned, also smiling, upon him. The sight was too much for the little fellow. No smile of Harold's could relieve that ogre-like blackness. With a shrill scream he turned, made scarce a single step forward, and was dashed helplessly over the edge of the precipice.

Harold Bright felt a spasm of horror run through his frame, but he did not lose his presence of mind.

Without waiting to peer over the brink, he raised his voice and shouted to the child's companions. Then with a bound he threw his body along the ground and leaned over, fully expecting to behold, away down among the trees and boulders, hundreds of feet, a tiny

mangled heap of flesh. Judge of his surprise and relief on realizing that the child's fall had been broken by the limbs of a sapling, which, along with many others, grew along the sides of the Palisades. In all probability, he explained to the breathless women who came running to meet him, their charge was practically unhurt. The sapling was only some fifteen feet from the top of the cliff, and would not be a difficult matter to reach. The child had evidently been stunned by the fall, as he lay perfectly still. The only trouble to be feared was that he might become excited and move before he could be rescued. In a few simple words Harold explained how the accident occurred and of his presence there. He begged that three or four of the older children be sent for help and ropes, and then without more ado threw off his coat and began to examine the face of the cliff.

As the seconds flew by, the danger that the child might return to consciousness and move returned to him with such force that he determined to attempt the work of rescue alone. The nearest house was half a mile distant ; it might be fifteen minutes before help arrived. A closer examination of the bough showed more plainly than ever the extreme precariousness of the child's lodgment. A sudden gust of wind might render the fall fatal and rescue absolutely hopeless. There was but one really wise, though daring thing to do. It was quite possible to descend the cliff by the aid of stones and shrubbery, and, having approached the sapling, either to trust to its strength in bearing two or to hold the child in a secure position until help arrived. All of this Harold accomplished almost

as soon as he had declared his intentions. The women, all of whom were young, appeared to be quite as cool and self-possessed as it was possible to be under the circumstances. One of them even found time, while Harold's difficult and perilous descent was being made, to make an observation on his appearance.

"Girls, I never saw a negro like that before," she said. "I cannot believe that he *is* a negro."

Shortly after Harold reached the sapling the child returned to consciousness, and immediately made an involuntary movement, which would have sufficed to dislodge him from its branches. It was only then that the wisdom of Harold's venture was thoroughly apprehended by the anxious watchers above.

"God bless you!" one of them ejaculated, and the rest looked into each other's eyes. The coolest of the party was a brunette of about twenty-five, who scarcely removed her eyes once from Harold.

It was said that her face was the hue of snow and that she grappled the arm of one of her companions in a vice. She was too much moved to speak mere idle words of praise or encouragement. She was the sister of the boy.

In five minutes more succor came. Two laborers let down a slender rope, with which Harold bound the boy's waist, who began to cry in the most natural manner. He was told to hold on tightly, and foot by foot he was drawn safely up and landed on the top of the cliff, very little the worse for his mishap.

His rescuer now proceeded to free himself from his own surroundings. Strange as it may seem, it was a

much more treacherous ascent than descent, but Harold shunned the rope, which was quite insufficient to support more than a child's weight, and proceeded to work his way sideways to the summit. He continued in this manner until he hung directly over a sort of projecting ledge, thirty-five feet below, and his right hand grasped a shrub two feet from the top.

“Good Heavens, but he should not be allowed to climb that without help !”

It was again the grateful sister who spoke. One of the laborers was in the act of reaching down to give him aid, and the whole party was viewing the task as already accomplished, when the stone loosened in its clayey socket, a set of sable fingers clutched nervously at the brow of the precipice, and the next moment the body of Harold shot downward, a cry of horror echoing along its course.

CHAPTER XXI.

“ Have you eyes ?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed
And batten on this moor ? ”

— *Hamlet.*

HAROLD lay for weeks in the shadow of death. His falling upon the earthy ledge instead of on the rocks below alone saved his life. Mr. Markham, the uncle of the child so heroically rescued, had summoned the best medical aid, and himself took a deep interest in the brave black's recovery.

As for Miss Mildred Markham, her gratitude gave way to a sense of acquired right in a hero. She told the story of the rescue fifty times, and in each repetition she bequeathed an additional fascination to her listeners. So attractive did the tale become in her hands, that the young men and the newspaper reporters fancied for a moment they were listening at the court of Haroun to a romance from the lips of Schehezerade.

As for Harold, he remained, like the Abyssinian prince in the tale, a captive in spite of himself. Partially returned to consciousness, he found that his arm and leg had been broken and that he had sustained other, if slight injuries. As his eyes became fully opened and his vision more alert, he had found these riveted on a beautiful young woman standing over him at his bedside. Then he remembered the events just

preceding the accident and inquired about his surroundings.

“Where am I?” he asked, in a feeble whisper.

A doctor was in the room now. An ill-concealed sneer was on his lips even as he bid his patient compose himself.

“There, there, George, take it easy—don’t talk,” he said, almost flippantly.

Harold gritted his teeth. A couple of decades before this doctor would, in the same way, have called him *Cuffy*. Harold learned that L’Heureux had been there, and having convinced himself that his friend’s injuries were not fatal, had begged that he might be removed as soon as that process could be effected without danger. Mr. Markham had himself replied to this request, and first became aware, from some answers let fall by L’Heureux, that the savior of his little orphan nephew was no ordinary black. At the dinner-table the quality of his linen had first invited discussion by the female members of the household. The stamp of gentility which Harold habitually bore, apparent even in repose and under his jet skin, became a nine-days’ wonder among the domestics.

Then came the long fever. The pent-up torments of many weary months now found a wild, incoherent ebulliency in his ravings. Harold fancied himself a lord who had been wronged of his rights. At another time he called wildly for his horse, and wept because Herr Felix had ordered the animal shot. He mistook the Irish domestic who entered the apartment for his old nurse, Ellen Shaw, dead and buried these many

years. He called Miss Markham Lady May, to her utter amazement and the physician's sneering curiosity.

But over all these fantasies hung the deep black shadow of Inigo Bright as of a great demon, which was forever moulding Harold to his ends or threatening him with horrible torments. Over all the lesser characters in the sick man's trance spread the figure of the Experimentist.

"Look, look!" he would shriek; "there, there he is! Oh, no, no; I cannot do it! He is pointing at me! I must do as he bids." Then he would cower on his pillow as if a real Titan had held out a threatening and a powerful clutch over his head.

When Mildred Markham was not reading poetry and novels or writing, she sat listening to these strange utterances of the sick man. At first she thought their allusions to be a not unnatural hallucination. They were the hollow vaporings of a fevered dream. But continued day after day, regular, appealing, and consistent, her own imagination took fire. Mildred was an orphan. Her uncle being a weak, indulgent man, who was rather afraid of his niece, saw the machinations of genius in her every simple caprice. He would have placed the half-dying youth in a cot in the barn or woodshed, if Mildred had not ordered him transported to one of the lightest, airiest rooms in the whole house. This room bordered on the lower veranda. Thither the young woman came and sat, and marvelled and speculated, and nursed him as only an ardorous, spoiled feminine temperament can, for whole summer afternoons. She charged the regular attendant to tell her all the young sufferer

said which could shed any light on his past. For a time she actually forgot herself in the thought of a possible romance. She dreamed of Harold as a brave and generous Othello, and in the dim, uncertain light a yielding Desdemona became at once visible.

At another time a change came across the spirit of her dreams, and Harold would be Rasselos or Aladdin amid the draped ravishment of Oriental finery.

An idle girl can imagine almost anything under the blue vault of heaven.

One day her maid brought her a packet of letters and papers which had been found in Harold's coat while the garment was being brushed. Harold's horse had grown sleek and fat during his master's illness. Harold's linen had been changed during his fever and his clothes hung up. Mildred Markham could not resist the curiosity to examine these epistles. There were many verses written by the hand and from the heart of this man. A letter from Arthur Danthorne, dated from the Embassy at Paris, made her start and leap like a child with curiosity and wonderment. Surely mortal eye had never rested upon such gentility and such pathos bound in so uncouth a covering before. One of the verses, entitled "Isolation," set her brain fairly dancing with its suggestiveness. The verses ran in this fashion :

" All mankind is moving round me,
With its restlessness of mind ;
But Fate's mighty chains have bound me
In a prison from my kind.

" Others have their pain and pleasure,
Others have their ends to gain,

Moving to the world's great measure,
I alone have only pain !

“ While yon millions, happy, hoping,
 Feel all that youth has e'er to give,
In the darkness I am groping,
 Hardly deeming that I live.

“ Is there no one—God, give answer
 Who knows solitude like mine,
Is it that my soul is denser?
 Has my heart blood changed to brine

“ Heartstrings dulled, no chord respond
 Save to touch of sympathy.
Surely others like despondeth,
 Surely some are lone as I !”

When Mildred read this poem she was profoundly touched. For the first time since her childhood she abandoned selfishness. One must first understand her character. She had often wept for herself, never for another's woes. She burst into tears. She thought she saw a strange analogy in the yearnings of her own life to that of the man who had risked his life to save that of her infant brother. She crept out of her chamber and entered the room where Harold lay. His countenance wore a placid smile and he was wrapped in sleep. An indescribable feeling came over her as she surveyed the worn and wasted figure on the couch.

When Harold Bright opened his eyes the next day Mildred Markham was near him. He thanked his benefactress again and again for her kindness toward him as soon as she had revealed herself to him.

In return, Mildred asked him to tell her the story

of his life. She knew it was impossible that he could be that which he seemed. But in his stronger and better moments Harold would not have yielded to this request. To relate the history of his childhood and youth and travels, all of which he owed to Inigo, to a stranger, was revolting to his nature—he could not tell why. But now a spell was upon him.

In low tones and simple imagery he set forth, sometimes painfully, to this girl of another race his own strange history.

Mildred was touched by it ; she could not have been otherwise. Gifted with a strong imagination, she exaggerated his isolated condition and her own. She scarcely dared to trust herself for several days in his presence. Thus the crisis approached.

CHAPTER XXII.

“ The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
And is not careful what they mean thereby,
Knowing that with the shadow of his wings
He can at pleasure stint their melody.”

—SHAKESPEARE.

THE very impossibility and madness of the affair acted as fuel for Mildred’s passion. Naturally Harold was affected, too, but that is not so remarkable. In the first place, no woman had ever spoken to him so before ; no woman had ever cared for him thus. In his weak state he continued to listen to the voice of Mildred Markham with the shadow of the past upon him.

Suddenly a great light broke upon his vision, and he sent for L’Heureux and begged to return to the city. The doctor opposed it, but Harold was obdurate. Mildred Markham preferred to be silent. Perhaps she was trying to battle with this unnatural predilection of hers, to stifle it ere it overpowered her. At any rate, she kept to her room, and it was announced that she was ill. It was not till after the black youth had gone that her passion returned to her with accumulated force.

L’Heureux and his wife took Harold’s return gravely. They welcomed him with hearty affection. As the physician had predicted, the change had done him no good. In truth, a relapse had almost set in.

He took to his bed and remained there for over a fortnight. During this time Harold's brain all but broken down with the continued strain of thinking. He made notes in a tablet which he kept under his pillow. He dictated a long leader for the paper to L'Heureux, who at first would not hear of his making such an effort. Wearied of speculation, his mental activity took the form of iterated passages from his favorite books. It was in this short fortnight that many of his later and most dangerous opinions were formed. A reference in a newspaper L'Heureux was reading called forth his bitterest anger and sarcasm.

"L'Heureux," he said, "let us come right down to the issue frankly. What do you mean by the 'equality of man'?"

"Why," began L'Heureux, wonderingly, "I guess you know pretty well. It's what the *Freeman* has been preaching."

"Oh, confound the *Freeman*!"

L'Heureux took umbrage.

Harold hastened to say :

"Hold on, old fellow, don't be angry. Try and answer my question. When you speak of all men being equal, do you mean that they are really so?"

"For political purposes, yes. That is all I care about."

"Very well. Do you recall that line in 'Felix Holt' — 'No party, religious or political, has laid it down as a principle that all men are equally virtuous'? There's irony for you. But why do you say political? You grant there are social distinctions?"

"It wouldn't do to preach that doctrine in the *Freeman*. Yes, there are several lines : the great one between rich and poor, the small one between brains and folly, and—and the ungranted one—between white and black."

"Yes," reflected Harold, grandiloquently ; "the line—the line—but what is it?"

And then he wrote :

"The line, the defined, concise, circumscribed boundary of social, political, and religious privileges, that furnishes conservatism an excuse and fanaticism a text? Or the line, that hazy, ambiguous, apocryphal division, jeered at by honest Tom and confirmed by our philosophers, anarchists, and election-time pamphleteers?" This he repeated aloud.

"Harold, where did you learn to talk like that?"

It was L'Heureux who thus spoke indignantly. Harold's words had hurt him. Harold's reply seemed flippant and immaterial, and, thinking him unwell, the senior editor of the *Freeman* quietly left the room.

In less than an hour after the foregoing conversation Harold arose and dressed himself unaided for the first time since the accident. He reflected :

"Now why should L'Heureux be blind? Equality—bah! it almost makes me laugh. The tallest pine and the most stunted fir yield alike to the woodman's axe, but that doesn't prevent the pine from having the most sunlight and the most air. Truly we are all equal—in death. As the Frenchman says : 'The only thing common to all men is the common end of all men.' We are all born and we all eat, but you cannot spoil the epigram, for what about

the silver spoons at birth and the diet of pheasant's wings ? And, again, all birds fly, but it is the eagle that soars the highest, and the tiny, paltry lark laughs at the industrious barn fowl."

" There is a simile for you, L'Heureux," pursued Harold, bitterly. " The birds are all free, but what would the hen do soaring under the vault of the blue sky and the lark hopping laboriously over the barn-yard fence ?"

Harold leaned his chest heavily against the frame of the window and looked across the tops of the houses. He watched the smoke of the chimneys and went on musing. Of a sudden there came a knock at the door, and he called upon whoever it was to enter. It turned out to be Cassius White, one of the deacons of the church in Thirty—th Street. Cassius White was very much attached to Harold. He was quite shocked to find him out of bed, and cautioned him to be more careful of the doctor's injunctions.

" Yo' kaint look out nigh enough, Mr. Bright. This yere fever's a mighty delicate thing, and yo' must be mighty particular, or there will surely come a relapse."

" Sit down, Cassius," said Harold, unheeding the other's remarks. " I'm glad you have come, for I want to talk to you." There was silence for several moments, and then the younger man said : " You used to teach school once, didn't you ? At least, I have heard so. Learned to read and write and taught it to a number of freedmen just after the war."

Cassius White nodded.

" All my teachers were white men, you know,' pursued the younger man ; and after a pause : " Did you believe the Reconstructionists when they told you that you were now on a level with your masters ? "

" It came quite sudden, sure," returned Cassius.

" Well, they were lying," continued Harold, coolly. He was feeling his way. He wished to test his new line of thought. " They were lying to you, as you know by this time, for mere political motives. It is all very well for a mocking-bird, who has the unbounded ether of limitless space to soar in, to tell the caged creature that it, too, is free ; but his telling doesn't make it so any more than it does for one man to tell another that he can henceforth fly, when it happens that God made that man without wings. Human physical conditions prevent equality—they often make it impossible ; but the great lie remains unatoned and unpunished. A lie has been told to seven millions of hungry, simple, trusting people, who have toiled on since with an unflagging, abiding confidence, only to find when they come to the borders of Canaan that the promised land is not for them."

" We certainly ought to have offices," reflected Cassius.

" Ought to have !" repeated Harold, grimly—" ought to have ! No, my friend, you are a fool. It is the wisest of fools that knows his own folly. As long as we are a race of gibbering idiots we should have nothing—except revenge ; yes, even fools can have that. Revenge ! The ' colored man ' forsooth ! Are we ashamed of making *black* unfashionable if we call ourselves so ? And you—you don't mean to be a

fool. You are only a contemptible, misguided person, my friend, to think that by labelling yourself *White* to change men's opinion of you. Why call yourself so? I am sure that was not your master's name. Go and petition the Legislature to-morrow for a change. Anyway, you have sons, and perhaps we who must act shall need them."

Cassius hobbled out of the room in the deepest chagrin.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“A man should, whatever happens, stick to his own caste, race, and breed. Let the white go to the white and black to the black. Then, whatever trouble falls is in the ordinary course of things—neither sudden, alien, nor unexpected.”—R. KIPLING.

UPON his recovery Harold worked for whole hours in the office of the paper without conversing much with L’Heureux. He had more than once heard from Mildred Markham—this much was plain. That it racked him none could doubt. At such times he grew hardened and his black visage became set like a vice. It was not for hours, but for days at a time. It seemed then as if he lost consciousness of his own identity and brooded over the passage of mere circumstances.

One day in the ensuing autumn, a bright, crisp, sunshiny morning, found him strolling meditatively through the Park. The *Freeman* had gone to press the day before, and it was the custom of both L’Heureux and himself to snatch a half holiday at such times each week. Time had been when L’Heureux accompanied him on these rides or rambles. Harold went alone now. His erect, elastic figure moved along at an easy pace, neither turning to the right nor to the left, lest by any chance he should be unpleasantly diverted by objects on the course. Any one who saw him at such times usually looked twice. It was not a

sight to be seen every day. Anderson, the wealthy negro coal merchant, who owned his coach and pair, was fond of pointing out the English black to his friends as a type of what the race would be some day. The whites admired Harold at sight ; when they heard more of him they shook their heads and muttered the one word. It was "*Exception.*"

Harold never looked better in his life than on this particular morning. He increased his pace for a moment down one of the winding paths which lead so unexpectedly to sunken dells and benched nooks. Now it ran into the equestrian roadway, overhung with tall maples and elm shrubs. To continue on his way by the route he had taken, it was necessary for Harold to cross this road. He had taken a single step forward when two figures on horseback loomed up from behind the bend. Harold saw only indistinctly that one was a female, and, merely reconsidering the step he had taken, waited for the pair to pass without further scrutiny. The next moment a strange thing happened. The woman had drawn rein, reeled in her saddle, and would have fallen if the black had not sprung forth and grasped her arm. It was Miss Mildred Markham. In another instant she had fainted in his arms. Her companion was so astonished that he lost his wits and could not have lifted a hand. He was a pale youth in a very high collar.

"Run for some water, quick," said Harold, calmly. The escort stared inanely.

"Will you go?" Harold spoke fiercely, and this high-born gentleman was off at the bidding of his late bondsman. He returned with a tin cup wrenched

from a fountain hard by the aqueduct, just as Harold had lifted Miss Markham bodily from her horse and laid her on the grass with her head on his knee. He took the vessel from her escort in silence. Wetting her pocket-handkerchief, he bathed her forehead gently. Miss Markham opened her eyes, looked around wildly for a moment, and closed them again. It seemed as if she were revolving the situation in her mind. When she opened her eyes again she sprang unaided to her feet. Looking her companion straight in the face, she lifted her finger dramatically and uttered the one word, "Go!"

If the youth had been a trained spaniel he could not have obeyed more punctiliously. Mounting his horse he wheeled about and gave Mildred a half-terrified, half-appealing look, which she answered with scorn. Almost immediately the hoofs of his horse were echoing from the bend in the road.

Harold was the first to speak.

"Wasn't that injudicious?" he said. He spoke calmly, even reproachfully.

For answer Mildred Markham sprang toward him like a wild creature, and winding her arms about his neck, murmured passionately :

"I care nothing for the world. I *love* you!"

Months of self-repression told on both. Harold found himself unmanned. As for the woman, she was oblivious. The former was the first to rally. Taking Mildred's arm with one hand and passing the bridle of the horse through the other, he led them both across the road. Deftly securing the animal to the bough of a tree, he motioned his companion to a rustic

bench, to which he half drew, half bore her. She was taken with a violent fit of weeping. A pair of equestrians passed hurriedly. With admirable presence of mind Harold hung a handkerchief over his brow. He did not care to attract unwonted attention. Mildred observed the action.

“I hate the world!” she muttered, chokingly, “because—they despise you.”

Harold at length spoke.

“Stop, Miss Markham! I must—it is my duty to recall you to yours.”

Mildred paid no attention to the spirit of the speech.

“*Miss Markham?*” she asked, petulantly.

“Mildred, then, if you will. Do not think I haven’t struggled over this thing,” he went on, hastily; “I am of different clay from yours. God never intended that we should wed—”

“Wed! Wed! Gracious Heaven! why wed? What do I care for marriage. I ask for your love.” And she clasped him more tightly than ever, as if fearing his defection.

“But do you not think of me?” Harold asked, with reproach in his tone.

“You, you! Do we not both hate the world? What has it to give either of us? Let us fly! I have money, wealth in my own right. We can be together, Harold! Ah!” cried Mildred, “you do not understand, you do not know how I love you!”

The voice of the temptress sank deep into Harold’s heart. The voice of the world did not seem as strange to him as to her. He was by breeding a gentleman.

The distinctions of race were comparatively new. When his eyes had been opened he had thought his entire existence blighted forever. With the unselfish strength he had left he had already done all in his power to prevent, put away, and blot out the love of one whom he had come to learn of a higher, nobler race. Fate had again thrown it across his path. Why should he not take advantage of it? He had intended to revenge himself on the world for the misfortune of his being in it. He had planned to devote himself and his talents to the race—to revenge himself in avenging their wrongs. But why further expose himself to insult and humiliation? Here was a woman whom he had fascinated so intensely that she forgot her very self-respect. It did not occur to Harold that if he had been of her own race she perhaps would not have cared for him. Besides, he loved her. He could love her more. He could honorably accept her fortune. But honorably or not, what did it matter to him, an outcast, a pariah, a leper, what were the world's customs and forms to one whom his equals did not recognize as an equal and never would unto eternity, if they could help it? All this Harold thought as he looked for an instant into Mildred's face, and yet he answered :

“ Stop! Our ways in life lie apart. It is true I love you, but we must never meet again. Another instant and I should have been lost forever, and my name and yours would have been irretrievably ruined. I hate to think of the consequences which would result from such a union as ours. Mount your horse, Miss Markham, and return to your father. Black as

I am, the world shall not say I could do so black a deed. Black, black—in all its fairness black."

So saying, he led his companion from their seat and bid her mount. Mildred, dazed, speechless with combined anger and sorrow, obeyed. Harold did not even take her hand : he only bowed reverently. Then giving a sign to the animal, he waited until it had started, and listening to the echoes in the distance, he placed his hat firmly on his head and strode back over the path.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“ By Heaven, thy love is black as ebony !”

—*Love's Labour's Lost.*

THAT night the legions of anger, misery, hate, and regret flanked and reflanked themselves before Harold's fevered vision. All through the thick and silent shadows he tossed upon his pillow. He was the prey of a million merciless fancies. When the gray, cold spirit of dawn came creeping into the chamber, it found a man morally racked and helpless. Harold Bright had been tempted. He had resisted without even the hope of moral applause.

Insidiously and without his being wholly aware of it, there came to him with the dawn a much stronger emotion. Hate of the world had at length joined his side. Hate of the white had stolen across his outer battlements and intrenched itself in the place of the moral agent.

Harold slept two hours after dawn, but his dreams were ghastly.

When the sleeper awoke the new power had taken possession of his breast, and his mind as to his future was thoroughly made up. He would sell his one-third interest in the *Freeman* to L'Heureux, if the latter wished it. It was his by every right. He had toiled years for it, and the paper had become prosperous.

When he had received the money he determined to travel. His desire now was to tread on Southern soil. He had reasons in his own breast for visiting that section of the vast country wherein he had elected to live.

Actuated by these impulses, Harold hastily arose. He had not shown similar alacrity for many weeks. As he prepared his toilet he soliloquized.

It was true, he said to himself, he had now a new incentive for life and action, but it seemed to him paltry and unworthy compared with his old ideals. He no longer held the old ambition. It is the stern delight of striving that animates men and sends the blood bounding through their veins. Harold Bright had been ambitious, but he had not had a defined ambition. Long ago, though, after that first interview with L'Heureux, ambition had helped him rally from the shock which his pride and manhood had received.

“Surely I can become somebody—something here,” he had said. “If God has lifted me above my race, why should these and all the world not see me above their heads?”

He was one, indeed, who struggled against the tide. As the months and years had slipped by doubt and despair at times found a haven in his heart, but he never permitted himself to mistrust his own powers. Once, when he, months ago, had done something particularly clever which attracted the notice of a great journal of the metropolis, everybody hastened to congratulate him. Harold enjoyed their praise.

And each year, separated as he was from the great body of his race by the only true distinction of the human body politic, he lost his buoyancy as he divined more. The anomaly of his situation had at first been a novelty which, degrading as it was, he could bear cheerfully and did. But as the novelty wore away, he had set himself about examining his fellows and discovering if the writers of the books he had read were right or wrong. Where did his race stand? What *was* his status? This for two years had been his greatest study. From it he had turned, as he could but have done, with chagrin and wretchedness.

“If they wouldn’t lie to us, L’Heureux, it wouldn’t be so hard to bear!” he once said, stormily. “Why does H—— swear we are his equals, when he knows he is lying. His bringing up statistics in the Senate to prove that the colored man is enjoying social and political privileges he never enjoyed before is insulting to us and a whole nation. We can’t all be journalists, L’Heureux, and the rest of us are still porters and cooks and hod-carriers. We are *tolerated* by our *dear* friends! How can we encourage manhood among us when our pride and self-respect is every day trampled upon. I never take a seat in a common street car but what I am humiliated. We may be physically clean, intellectually superior, and even pecuniarily above them, yet they recognize no exceptions and brand us all swine alike.”

“You will get used to it,” stated L’Heureux, with cold candor; “it is because your spirit is high and because you are so sensitive.”

“I hope to God it will be broken soon. One

would think we were lepers and covered with sores instead of being merely black."

"I could tell you why," began L'Heureux, but he was silent. Years of observation had taught him to see racial antipathy in its proper light.

But Harold had not always been moping. He had laid himself out to please at times, and succeeded admirably. He attended Sarah L'Heureux's parties with enthusiastic regularity, and won the hearts of the black belles as no black had ever done before. He had quickly learned to adapt himself to them and their tastes.

Then suddenly, without warning, had come the incident on the Palisades—that strange, double infatuation of Mildred Markham and himself. He had thought it all over and relegated to the past his past, so fortuitous and so unique. Then the shadow had again fallen upon him.

This time Harold's reason almost tottered. It is difficult to see how he could have escaped eternal blight if a strange thing had not happened. A little seed took root in his mind.

The name of the seed was Hate. It was of the kind whose fruit is vengeance.

Harold dressed himself this morning and descended to breakfast. After the repast he mentioned his suddenly formed resolve to L'Heureux. It seemed as if L'Heureux could scarce believe his ears.

"But, Bright," he faltered, in astonishment, "the idea of selling your share. I have told you again and again you have done more than I to make the *Free-man.*"

"Yes; but I must go. In fact, my old friend, I have determined to leave for South Carolina to-morrow."

L'Heureux stopped and looked at his companion, amazed.

"Well, of course," he began, "you know best; but wait, why do you wish to sell what you have earned? You are going South. That is the very thing. I have often wanted to go, but—but you know the risk for me. The whites are not fond of an educated colored man, a 'nigger out of his place.' Why can you not go in the interests of the *Freeman*?"

Harold had not thought of that. He was quite touched at his friend's kindness.

"It will take money, L'Heureux," he said, at length. "I do not intend to separate myself entirely from the *Freeman*, but you know how we differ."

"Yes, I know. We think differently now. I do not know what you think, Harold, but I have seen the change. Perhaps I guess but half of it!"

"You would not have me write that which you know I do not believe."

"You are right; although at last our roads have begun to diverge, the scenery and environments of both paths are identical. We have still much in common; besides, you may yet retrace your steps. Go South and write of what you see. I will give you the money. I shall draw five hundred dollars from the bank this morning, representing, you know, part of the paper's surplus fund," L'Heureux added with a laugh.

But the two friends had, indeed, lately become much

estranged. L'Heureux was devoted to the interests of his race. He believed in the future of himself and kind. He fancied he saw a gradual working out of the destiny of his race. The negro was to take his seat on the level of the white man. The hand that was to hold the sceptre of government was to be black in proportion as the sinewy arm that wields the axe of labor now is. Education was to accomplish all this. In his appeal to the Convention of the Children of African Ancestry he had said : " Ultimately in the homes of the colored people will the so-called race problem be solved." The editor of the *Freeman* saw injustice in not fully recognizing the black man as a man and brother, but Bright began to see and appreciate the injustice of recognizing him from the first at all.

Harold delayed his departure for two days longer. L'Heureux accompanied him across the Hudson to the depot and bade him an affectionate God-speed. As for L'Heureux, he sincerely thought his friend and co-worker was suffering from a mental struggle, such as he himself had previously known and combatted. L'Heureux knew nothing of Mildred Markham.

The journey was quick, quiet, and engaging—that is, his fellow-travellers found it so. Among Harold's papers, letters of introduction to the towns and sections he proposed to visit found no place. It invariably happened that the black man of most political and social importance in each city was the *Freeman's* special correspondent and stanch adherent. It is difficult to appreciate the great power and circulation the paper

had by degrees obtained among negroes who were almost illiterate; but its prestige was recognized, and Harold Bright was, as events proved, hailed with every evidence of cordiality. The day upon which he arrived in Charleston was very different from that upon which he had landed in America five years since. Although the seasons were close upon each other, the sun now shone with increasing splendor. The air, instead of being bleak and damp, shed mild vapors over the city.

CHAPTER XXV.

“ And moved through life of lower phase.”

Two figures were seated in the haze of a November twilight.

“ You ought certainly to be content,” mused the first speaker, as if in comment on a personal narrative he had just heard.

“ Yes, sah,” assented the other, earnestly ; “ I reckon I ought.”

“ You have a pleasant home ?”

“ Yes, right pleasant.”

“ And good health ?”

“ Well, I ain’t complainin’. I s’pose ef the white man would give us a show I’d be certainly content ; but he ain’t a-done it an’ he ain’t a-gwine to. I’ve given up hopin’ he ever will. Yo’ got to go North fo’ politics, an’ I ain’t a-gwine to leave (less I’m compelled to) fo’ no man. Yo’ see, Mr. Bright, I was raised right yere, an’ I don’t want to leave or let the folks leave if I kin help it.”

Abel Kurtz was the name of the last speaker. He was fortunate in being *one* out of a *thousand* of ex-slaves. He had acquired a home and considerable property and a paying business. His white fellow-citizens never had any trouble with Abel, for Abel, if any man did, “ knew his place” and kept in it. A cook during the war, Abel was now employed in a

somewhat higher capacity by some of the best families of Charleston. Abel Kurtz was a clear-headed, intelligent negro, obsequious to the whites at all times when it was to his advantage to be so. Always good-natured, polite, it was only upon rare occasions that he was *hail-fellow-well-met* with his own race. He led Harold into his cosey sitting-room, where the open fire, burning brightly, threw shadows on the tasty furniture and *bric-à-brac*, and presented him to his wife and daughters. After a wholesome, well-cooked repast and a short chat with the family, Harold begged to be shown to his room. Harold slept in the best apartment in the house and slept soundly. On the morrow, almost before the sun was up, he had risen and walked out to the Battery, pacing its walks and gazing out at sea.

It was then that, as his eye drank in the smooth surface of the bay, skimmed by restless gulls and fanned by fruit-scented breezes from the Gulf, his heart for a moment forgot its trouble, and he again felt a child's emotions. He no longer remembered that a heavy burden lay upon him for all time. Harold forgot the curse of Canaan. He was by temperament a man who would have deemed a lowly fate by far the happiest, but philosophize as he would, he could not reconcile himself to the one he found himself in. In the crisp morning sunlight health, peace, and fresh air appeared to him inestimable treasures, for which he would exchange all the feverish hopes and hollow joys of an urban existence. The motives which had brought him where he was were temporarily lost. A boyish gladness surged in his soul.

Then it was that he suddenly came to himself, and the frenzied look he cast at the water beating upon the Battery stones startled the negro boatman who saw him from below. When he became wholly calm and rational, he found himself walking very fast back to his host's house.

Abel Kurtz, the caterer, in a white vest and a massive watch-chain, stood awaiting him on the piazza.

"I was most afraid yo' wouldn't be back in time fo' breakfast, Mr. Bright," he said, grinning.

Harold responded with a smile.

Abel thought to himself :

"A mighty fine gentleman, this yere ! Wouldn't think to hear him talk he was a nigger at all. Hit beats all I ever see."

To Harold the honest caterer said :

"My young master used to take er walk befo' breakfast every morning. He's dead and done buried a long time now. But he war a mighty likely man. A fine man war Master Charles." The old fellow even wiped away a tear. "Have another cup of coffee, Mr. Bright ?"

The three daughters of the old man were present at the meal. The eldest was twenty-five, the youngest about fourteen. All had received a fair education, but one had profited by it more than the rest. Emily, the middle daughter, had developed a sensitive soul, and came to be thought morbid. She was the only member of this black household who remained shut up in the house. In the affairs to which her elder sister devoted her time and presence she was conspicuous by her absence. She was ashamed of her

race, malicious people said. Harold gleaned these facts during the day, for her black sisters, and especially her mother seldom let an occasion pass to good-humoredly twit her about it; but the girl herself was silent, even to taciturnity. Harold learned as much as he could from Abel Kurtz and his family. In the afternoon he drove out with Basie, the eldest daughter, who showed him the city, its people and its magnolia-trees. She told him incidents of the earthquake and drove him out to the cemetery to look at the picturesque and historic graves.

When they returned Harold found a lot of well-dressed negroes awaiting him, friends of Abel Kurtz. The old man introduced Harold to the assemblage with great and unctuous pride, as sincere as it was effusive. The black had long ago accustomed himself to these homely greetings, and had become inured to the inspection and admiration which he invariably evoked. He, perhaps, never forgot that he had once shone in the *salon* of a Mme. de Salécy, but entered into the spirit of his bitter surroundings with ingenuous pleasantry.

There were several of the most elect negro families present. One person, a pilot and a mulatto, essayed to be particularly witty and engaging. He told a good tale with gusto and kept the table in a roar. It transpired that he was in love with Emily Kurtz, who had already refused him twice. But the good-natured pilot was in no way put out. It was evident that he still thought his chances good to win the woman of his choice. After supper Abel Kurtz brought out some really excellent cigars. Abel lived well.

One of the company volunteered to tell a story. The narrator was an educated mulatto, lately a graduate of one of the great negro universities in the South. He was a physician, and told the following story with much pathos and quiet humor.

THE STORY OF MESSIAH.

Messiah (he began) was a negro of the old *régime*. When the fighting in his part of Mississippi was all over, Messiah, two black wenches and little black Pete were the only slaves left on the plantation.

When the master of the plantation was sure that the war was really over, the South whipped and himself ruined, he suddenly disappeared, after bequeathing his property to his nieces ; and it became currently rumored that he had shot himself through the head.

Messiah was a pretty old man then, and was known for miles around as a born musician. When the old man got his banjo down from its peg and began a-thrummin', there was pretty sure to be listeners. Messiah would have been worth a small fortune in the North, friends of his master used to say.

Well, 'Siah was pretty old now, and he had been a slave of the dead master all his life and part of his master's father before him. So when he heard the old slave-driver was dead, he forgot all the beatings, and all the thrashings, and all the stringings-up he had got from him, and bowed down and cried as if

NOTE.—The Story of Messiah is a genuine piece of folk-lore. It is quite distinct from the story, and it is here introduced in order to depict the "old-time negro," or the "negro of ante-bellum days."—THE AUTHOR.

his heart would break. The two wenches were rather attached to Uncle 'Siah, and tried to comfort him, but it was no use.

"He done been a good, kind marster to me, honeys, I's alone in the world now, shore!" he would say.

Shortly afterward the girls went away and married. Nobody bought the estate, and so for a time 'Siah and little Pete were permitted to occupy it unmolested, and might have done so for many years, while the timbers in the old mansion rotted away and the acres went to waste.

Regularly, as he had done every Sunday morning for years past, 'Siah would put on the old black frock-coat which had once belonged to Marster, and leading little Pete by one arm and toting his beloved banjo in the other, would sally over to the village, which was five miles distant, to attend church. When the services in the house of God were over, which was usually about noon, Messiah would strike a bee-line for Cap'n Hunt's place, on the hill, to play for the great folks assembled there. Mar'sr Hunt was nearly, if not quite as old as the old darky himself, but he always declared up to the day of his death that there was nobody who could play the banjo like 'Siah. When 'Siah's master had sent himself where thousands of his neighbors had been sent by the Yankees during the cruel war, Cap'n Hunt had offered the old man a home, but Messiah said :

"No; I lak to live heah, Mars'r Hunt, but I done kaint leave de old place. De ol' man ain't long here nohow, and he gwine sooner if he leave home."

And so he came tramping over every week, as he had

done for forty years, to thrum for the servants and the visitors, and the old master, most of all, on the Hunt plantation. And the cap'n saw that Messiah and his little *protégé*, Pete, were well provided for and never went hungry. As the months slipped by 'Siah became more and more convinced that his late Marster (who, to tell the truth, was a heartless, cold-blooded wretch, even to his betters) was as good a gentleman as had ever lived and a paragon of mercy and amiability. In the daytime he would busy himself hoeing a little corn patch he cultivated back of the mansion or tending the neglected flower-beds. When evening came and the sun was just going down, Hannah, the cook on the adjoining plantation, would send him over his supper, which he would share with Pete, and then the two would sit out and watch the great orb slowly sink behind the hills in perfect peace and contentment. At this moment, every evening, Pete would say : " Uncle 'Siah, kin I fotch it now ? "

" Hol' on a minit, honey. Sh' ain't done sot yit. Nev' kin play 'cep'n Sundays 'till de sun sots right down behin' de trees." Then he would say : " Run, chile, fotch 'er, fotch 'er, tum tum. Massy sakes, how de music jes' *ooze* out'n de ol' man's fingers ! I kin feel it—tum—tum—all a-runnin' up 'n' down my naik 'n' backbone. 'Pears lak it most got to come out somehow. Hand it yere, hon', " continued 'Siah.

" There wuz a ol' nigger who couldn't leave de home,
Tum—tum—ty—tum—tum,
And all de ol' folkses ast him fo' to room,
Tum—tum—ty—tum—tum ;

But de marster done died, and de nigger had ter stay,
 An' de white 'un and de niggers er couldn't draig him away,
 Tum—tum—ty—tum—tum."

"Pete!"

"Yes, Uncle 'Siah," said the little pickaninny.

"You ain't done forgot what I tol' yer about Marster?"

"Mars'r Hunt, uncle?"

"Look heah, chile," said Messiah, with a tinge of sternness in his voice, "yaint but one Marster what I tells yo' about he dead. Mars'r Hunt, he a good man, he a smart man, he seen a heap o' trouble, Mars'r Hunt. Yes, an' he a good man, and he a pow'ful rich man; but Mars'r Hunt ain't Marster. Yo' Uncle 'Siah er free nigger now, and dey hain't but one Marster fo' dis yere me and he. Whar am he, Pete, boy?"

"A-sittin' at the right hand of God, Unc' 'Siah," replied Pete, solemnly, and with a kind of awe.

The old darky had taught him to say this. Messiah leaned his body back, and holding his beloved banjo partly in his lap and partly resting on the ground, looked long and fixedly at the firmament.

"'Pears to me, honey, I kin see Marster a-sittin' up there by de side ob de Lawd. Look mighty peart, I reckon, with his white angel's wings on and his long black hair a-flowin' over his sho'ders, an'—

"I dream I see a angel bright,

Rise up, Moses, rise up;

With flappin' wings and garments white,

Rise up, Moses, rise up;

And the angel says, says he, ter me,

Rise up, 'Siah, rise up;

I's a gwine to carry you 'long with me,
Rise up, Moses, rise up."

" Dere's one ol' song I haben't sung since marster died. Reckon I ain't done forgot it, honey."

Messiah had been so absorbed in his song and his preceding rapt meditations, that he was entirely oblivious of the fact that Pete had curled up his little black legs on the stoop and gone to sleep. The old man laid down the banjo and picked Pete up tenderly and laid him on his cot inside the cabin.

" Done tol' that chile he worked too much t'-day. Ain't ol' enuff yit to tote plants lak a growed-up nigger. It done tired me, too, powerful. Now, what was I—hope I haben't disremembered it. Oh, yes—

" There wuz an old nigger, and his name was Uncle Ned,
There's one more ribber fo' ter cross ;
And he had no mo' wool on de top of his head,
There's one more ribber fo' ter cross.
Uncle Ned he went to de edge ob de stream,
There's—"

Just as he got to the first word of the refrain a strange black figure emerged from the darkness. It was so much darker than the night itself that Messiah had no difficulty in discerning it fully. It was black from head to foot, and with a strange sensation of awe and amazement 'Siah saw that two dusky wings projected from each of its shoulder-blades.

" Uncle 'Siah," says a deep, hollow voice, such as 'Siah had heard tell of in graveyards.

The old man was so frightened he couldn't answer. His tongue clove resolutely to the roof of his mouth.

“ ‘Siah, do you hear me talking to you ?”

“ Who—who is yo’ ?” whispers ‘Siah, trembling all over his old decrepit body.

“ What ! Don’t you know your old Marster, ‘Siah ? I am your old Marster, ‘Siah, before God.”

If the apparition had declared himself to be one of the celestial cherubim or the devil himself outright, Messiah would have believed him ; but to assert that he was the ghost of the late worshipped and lamented old slave-driver was a strain upon the old nigger’s credulity which even his terror could not bolster up. So ‘Siah plucked up and answered :

“ Who dat say he my Marster ? Who dat say he my Marster ? ‘Pears to me I heah er lot about young an’ wuthless niggers tryin’ ter scar’ ‘spectable folkses. Who done say he my Marster ?”

At this the shade came a step nearer, and, sure enough, old ‘Siah saw his master’s long hair and master’s scarred cheek, and everything about master but his white skin. The apparition was black all over.

“ ‘Siah, do you recognize me now ? Are you glad to see your old master ?”

But ‘Siah was still unconvinced.

“ Wha’ dem two t’ings a-stickin’ out’n yo’ back ?”

“ Those are wings, ‘Siah ; I use them to fly with up in heaven.”

‘Siah forgot himself so far as to say :

“ Go ‘long, chile ; whaffer yo’ try to conjure and fool dis yere ol’— why, yo’ BLACK—angel ?”

Instead of replying to ‘Siah’s taunting query, the figure bent a look of reproach upon the old darky,

and, coolly flapping his wings, began to mount in the air before 'Siah's astonished eyes.

"Lord hab mercy!" shrieked 'Siah. "Come back, angel, come back! I's on'y a ol', broke-down, no-account nigger. I didn't mean ter doubt yo'. Come back, angel!"

The apparition descended again.

"Do you believe me now, 'Siah?"

'Siah hesitated.

"If yo' is my Marster fo' shore, how yo' comes so black?"

"Because I used to beat you, 'Siah, and the Lord punished me for it. He says that as long as old 'Siah plays a banjo I have got to be black. And the Lord loves a banjo mighty well, 'Siah."

"Shore enuff, honey?" asked 'Siah, delightedly.

"He *dotes* on it. When I came up to get into heaven I couldn't get in, because the Lord said I shouldn't have beat Uncle 'Siah that played the banjo so well. Finally the Lord let me into the gates of Paradise, but He turned me black until Uncle 'Siah lays down the old banjo, never to take it up no more."

"Why is yo' come ter night, *Marster?*?" said 'Siah, after a pause.

"Because you played the old tune that you played when I gave you that awful beating back of the smoke-house, when I heard the Yankees were comin'. I been a-waiting a long time for you to play that, but you never did do it until to-night. Do you believe me now?"

"What night was dat, *Marster?*?" said 'Siah.

"On a Saturday night, 'Siah; I'll never forget it."

"Bress de Lawd ! Hallelujah ! You'se my Marster, shore," exclaimed the old man in a transport. "Saturday night it was, shore, 'cause I had ter go to bed, yo' licked me so hard. Couldn't play for Mars'r Hunt Sunday mo'ning. You'se Marster."

With these ejaculations the joyful darky ran to embrace the old slave-driver, only to find that he had vanished into thin air. 'Siah heard the wind sighing through the pines and saw the stars twinkling overhead, but no trace of his master could he find anywhere. Weeks passed by, and 'Siah never touched his beloved banjo, except when he went to play and sing at Mars'r Hunt's. He became more rigorously pious than ever, and spent his time star-gazing and wondering what Marster was doing up in heaven, and thinking what dreadful punishment the Lord had visited upon him.

One evening, after little Pete had gone to bed, Aunt Charlotte came over to visit Unc' 'Siah from the adjoining plantation.

"'Pears to me hon', yo' lookin' mighty bad. Yo' haben't had a chill, hab yo' ? You'se gettin' mighty ol', unc'. Does yo' eat all I sends over to yo' ?"

"Reckon I does, Sha'lott. Nuffin' de matter wif me, I tells yo'. How's missy, Sha'lott ?"

"Poorly, Unc' 'Siah, poorly. Doctor say she be all right presently, though. Pete a-growin' inter a great big chile, shore, eh, unc' ? Well, I gotter go, hon'. I gwine to give 'em all yo' love. Good-by, Uncle 'Siah, and tak' good care yourself."

A sudden inspiration seized 'Siah when Charlotte

was gone to take down the old banjo from where it had hung every week-day since his old Marster's visit. To tell the truth, 'Siah had literally been afraid to touch it except in the presence of company. The sight of the great black angel was too much for his nerves. But to-night, the first thing he knew, he was thrummin' away for dear life.

“ I'd lak ter stand on Jordan's brink,
 There's one more ribber fo' ter cross ;
 And face ter face ol' Peter t'ank,
 There's one mo' ribber fo' ter cross.
 I never knowed where de Lawd ter find,
 There's one mo' ribber fo' ter cross ;
 He lef' ol' Peter far behin',
 There's—”

“ 'Siah !” said a voice behind him.
 'Siah had heard the wings of the angel fluttering, but he did not look round.

“ Yes, Marster, I heah yo',” said Messiah, without turning his head and keeping the strings of the instrument still a-thrumming.

“ Are you going to stop, Uncle 'Siah ?”

“ Kaint do it, Marster,” replied 'Siah, without turning around.

“ I's er-gwine to sit on Zion's mount,
 And drink salvation from de fount,
 There's one mo' ribber fo' ter cross,
 One mo' ribber, one mo' ribber fo' ter cross.”

“ 'Siah, I have come back—”

“ De Lawd be praised !” exclaimed 'Siah.

“ And when I got to de top ob de hill
 I saw ol' Aaron—”

"I have come back, 'Siah, to ask a favor of you. I used to beat you mighty hard, 'Siah."

'Siah wheeled round in his excitement and faced the angel.

"Who done say so? Didn't hardly feel it. Is yo' really sorry, Marster?"

"I am powerfully sorry, 'Siah. Recollect when I got you down in the wood-pile and pounded your head between the pine sticks?"

"La' yes, Marster."

"Have you forgotten when I made Cuffee string you up to the beam end and gave you thirty lashes?"

"Forty, Marster," said 'Siah, rubbing his back at the mere recollection. "But, Marster, what's de favor yo' want o' me, Marster?"

The ghost of the slave-driver hesitated a moment and then said :

"I want you to go into the house and get my old snake lash. When you get it, lay it over my back as hard as ever you can until I hollows for you to quit! Do you hear me, 'Siah?"

Messiah stared in astonishment.

"I nebber could do dat, dear Marster," he said.

"Then I'll be obliged to stay black ever so long," declared the apparition. "I thought I could depend on you, 'Siah."

The old darky hesitated even before this heart-rending appeal. Such an exploit flavored strongly of the diabolical rather than the celestial. It was a trifle more than he had the fortitude to face. But, then, Messiah had been brought up to stand in fear and quaking of the Almighty wrath, and he knew that

when the Lord decreed there was no use grumbling. If the Lord was willing to forego any further punishment on the part of 'Siah's master through any act of 'Siah's, it would be a sin to refuse to let his master suffer.

"It's dreadful dark and spook-like in de ol' house, Mars'r Ghost," said 'Siah. "I's clar afraid ter fotch dat lash. 'Sides, I's shore I never could find it in de world, Marster."

While 'Siah said this he was revolving in his mind all the beatings Marster had spoken of, and the more he thought of them the more his present fear seemed to fade dimly away. 'Siah was now an instrument of the Lord. This was a very comforting and fortifying reflection. What other incentives and reflections lay at the bottom of his sudden change of spirit are perhaps better conjectured. With a little more parley with the shade of the late lamented planter, Messiah was off into the house, and after a lapse of a few moments returned with the long snake lash, which, indeed, was properly so named.

"Lemme see, 'Siah," said the master. "Are you sure this is the whip? Looks mighty long and big."

As he cast his eye over the lash's sinister proportions the shade shuddered.

"Dat's de ol' lash, Marster."

The shade took it in his own hands and shuddered again.

"Lordy-me! why, it's at least two feet longer than it used to be."

Messiah actually grinned. He had lost all fear now.

“ Might hab growed, Marster.”

The ghost seemed preoccupied.

“ See here, ’Siah, I forgot what I told you. The Lord said— Did I tell you to lay it on— ?”

“ As hard and powerful as I kin, marster. Oh, dat dis nigger had nebber been bo’n !”

As a matter of fact, ’Siah was quite cheerful at this particular moment. It did not promise to be such a bad thing, this serving the King.

In the mean time the angel had been busy removing his wings, an operation which, until his late master reassured him, ’Siah observed with returning alarm.

“ ’Siah, I’ve been a-thinkin’ that—that you had better lay it on light at first, and when you see me getting white, for God’s sake let me know. Let’s stand out where the moon can touch us.”

Messiah now began to tremble again. He was really so frightened at the bare thought of using the lash on his master’s body, that he was about to fall on his knees and beg off, when he happened to think how the wicked old slave-driver had once clipped off a piece of his ear with this selfsame weapon. This was an indignity which no respectable nigger could bear.

“ Marster, where will you have the fust crack ?”

“ I’m ready now, ’Siah. The Lord’s will be done ! Hallelujah to the Host ! Right across the shoulders, ’Siah. Glory to the Lamb !”

’Siah drew off, snapped the long lash into a sinister ophidian coil in mid-air, and brought it down rather mildly upon his Marster’s bared shoulder blades.

“ Ouch ! Yah ! Lord ! Ooooff—”

The late planter danced and capered about in the weird moonlight as if a thousand darts had been suddenly lanced into his flesh.

"Go on, 'Siah. Have it over quick! Ouch! Ooof! God in heaven! Yah—h—h! Roohh! Errrrrrrh! Oh—h—h! Mercy, Lord, mercy! Yah—h—h!"

'Siah was now getting thoroughly warmed to his strange task, and the way he made that whip fly was wondrous to behold.

"Am I getting white, 'Siah?"

"Not yit, marster," yelled back the old negro.

"Am I getting white now, 'Siah?"

"You'se—er—er—gittin'—brighter—honey," replied 'Siah, between breaths.

The old planter's shrieks seemed to excite the old man more and more. The great beating he got once for losing a hoe, the thrashing he received one Christmas Eve because Sis forgot to light the Marster's fire, the time Marster pushed him down-stairs and broke his arm—all came vividly back to his memory and added fresh sinews to his arm. His late Marster fairly shrieked in agony.

"Am—I—getting—whiter—'Siah?" he yelled.

'Siah looked, and sure enough his Marster's skin was really undergoing a change.

"Yes, Marster—you a mulatto!"

"Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! Ooooff! Am—I—a—quadroon yet, 'Siah?"

"Love de Lamb! Hallelujah! Most a quadroon, Marster," shrieked 'Siah.

"Am—I—oooff—a quadroon yet, Unc' 'Siah?"

" Hallelujah ! Praise de King ! Mary and Martha a-callin', Glory t' de Lamb ! Keep her up, honey ! Now, you'se a-got'er ! Keep er up, chile !"

'Siah had fallen into a merciless pendulum swing, and gave vent to ejaculations peculiar to negroes when chopping wood or performing any regular resonant exercise.

His master was fairly choked with pain.

" Hol' on, 'Siah. Gimme a rest, 'Siah ! Ouch ! Gr—rr ! Yah—hh ! Hol' on, 'Siah. For God's sake, hol' on !"

" Kaint stop now, Marster. Kaint go fo' to do hit ! 'Member de wood-pile ! Martha and er Mary ! Er black a pickaninny ! Pickin' on de banjo ! Don't you quit, honey !"

All at once Marster sank on his knees, and 'Siah could see by the moonlight that his skin was now quite the color of an octoroon. With his poor flayed back Marster was fast resolving into insensibility. Messiah tried to stop, but he might as well have tried to prevent the wind from blowing through the pines. Faster and faster fell the blows, and whiter and whiter grew his master. Noisier and noisier became the breeze, and lighter and lighter became the landscape.

When the sun came up a party of negro farm-hands, passing through the woods, found the old darkey leaning breathless over the corpse of a white man, who turned out to be none other than Mars'r Williams, who had disappeared some months before. 'Siah had strayed out in his sleep, it was supposed, and accidentally come across the body. Kind hands picked the old darky up, and were for carrying him

back to his old home ; but Messiah showed such signs of terror that they carried him over to Mars'r Hunt's. 'Siah never played the banjo any more and never told the story to any one but black Pete, to whom he turned over the once beloved instrument.

I have the banjo now, and my name was once only Pete,

CHAPTER XXVI.

" Let fools do good and fair men call for grace :
Aaron will have his soul black like his face."

—*Titus Andronicus.*

DURING the progress of this tale of folk-lore the honest pilot's inamorata excused herself, her sisters alleging that she went upstairs merely to mope.

Later in the evening her mother sent for her to perform something for the company on the piano, upon which instrument, it was proved, she could execute some very pretty selections and with spirit. Soon after the girl's playing was finished the party broke up. Harold and his host remained out on the back porch to smoke and chat.

During their talk, which ran chiefly upon political rather than personal matters, as being the tie which bound the two men most closely together, the old man had been revolving a very pretty idea in his head.

His eldest daughter to all appearances was likely to pursue her path through life unwedded, notwithstanding the fact that her father had as much, if not more property than any black in Charleston. He was not ready to part with any portion of it, however, to the first negro that came along. Here, it seemed to him, was a chance to make himself popular with his race, by allying his beloved Basie to a full-blooded black man, and to have the pleasure of counting such a refined and

intelligent person as Harold one of the family. He thought with a satisfied grin that the same idea had occurred to Basie herself in the course of the day. He had noticed her particularly attentive to his guest, and more than once he fancied he had detected Harold smiling blandly upon her. The fact was, Kurtz's eldest daughter was lively and talkative, and Harold stood in need of the benefit derived from just such talents. He needed information. This could hardly be called an understanding, certainly there was little that was mutual about it ; but old Abel was smitten with the idea of a possible alliance, and determined to keep Harold in the house as long as he could be induced to stay. The more Abel saw of his guest, the more he was pleased at the prospect of marrying him off to one of his daughters.

It was the old man's custom to sit out on the porch with his pipe until the cathedral clock rang midnight. Harold, therefore, excused himself and went alone upstairs to his room. Several days passed. The guest decided to trespass no longer on the hospitality of his friends. He had studied the city. His great desire after seeing the city was to visit the habitations of his race in the country. Indeed, it was to see the negro of the cabin that he had come South.

But one evening he surprised Emily Kurtz in the sitting-room looking over the books in the neat walnut case. He had wanted to know more about this girl, but it seemed as if she purposely eluded both his gaze and his society. She was by far the most comely of Kurtz's daughters. Most negro women are exquisitely modelled, and Emily had this physical trait in

perfection. She was even duskier than her two sisters, but her eye was brighter and her black tresses heavier. But Harold did not think of this. As was his custom, he spoke very freely to her when he had first made the girl communicative.

"I should think you would marry," he said, among other things.

"Never!" returned the girl.

Harold was interested at once in her vehemence.

"Ah, then you intended to at one time?"

"No; not since I was a mere child have I had such an intention."

"You are very strange."

"I am a negress," the girl returned, almost simply—simply, if it were possible that any one could consider such an extraordinary reply as partaking of simplicity.

Harold did not notice the look she bent upon him. He momentarily forgot.

"You could have married the pilot," he persisted.

"Who says so?"

"Your father told me so."

"Very well. I would have died first."

"Died first?" Harold stared at the girl in astonishment. "Why?"

"I am a negress, he is a negro; but I have stayed to talk long enough!"

There was a peculiar cast in the girl's eyes as she spoke, which the young man now noted for the first time—distress, deceit, or malevolence, he could not distinguish which. Emily turned to leave the room. Harold stood before the door with a half-appealing look in his eyes.

“Pardon me, Miss Kurtz,” he said, quite gently; “you do not understand me. For a week you have been a puzzle which I have tried to solve. You must tell me all. You must, indeed.”

The negress sat down again. So did Harold.

“What must I tell you?” she asked.

“Why, about yourself. Perhaps I can help you. Perhaps I already understand you. Perhaps I have suffered like you, but I must be sure. You do not hate the pilot, do you?”

“No; on the contrary, I—”

The black girl seemed to have become greatly moved since she had seated herself. She who was so ordinarily passive and silent seemed to thaw into responsiveness under Harold’s glance. Five minutes ago she answered wearily as one who had been aroused from a sound sleep. Then her annoyance seemed to fade, and she nervously chafed her eyelids as if a spectacle had presented itself, the reality of which she was not so sure. She was now thoroughly awake. No actress could have done the thing better.

“Well, on the contrary, you—”

“I hate him less than any negro I know.”

The word negro jarred on Harold in this instance. She pronounced it “nigra,” after the fashion of all educated Southerners. It had a contemptuous ring to it, much as if a white girl had spoken of her adorer as the American, the German, the Irishman. Why this sinister emphasis of the man’s race over the man’s self? he thought. But it pleased him to think at last he was getting at the mystery of this girl’s life.

“Wait,” he said. “I want you to speak to me

freely. If you wish it, no one shall ever know that which passes between us."

A shadow of a haughty smile flickered across the negress's face.

"I should never have spoken at all had I thought otherwise," she said.

"Have you, then, met with some great grief, some sorrow because of your race? Tell me all, as a brother."

"As a brother! Were you brother, sister, father, and mother rolled in one, you could be no more to me than you are. Do not start!" Harold had involuntarily risen. "I will answer your question. It is a great relief, after all, to open one's mouth to something besides trees and rocks and animals. You ask if I have met with some great sorrow. I suppose it was a sorrow once, but a callus has grown over it since the first shock. I can explain it simply. My skin is black, my equals—the only equals I recognize—refer to me as a 'nigger.' Is not that enough?"

Harold had intuitively grasped the speaker's meaning before she had uttered the first twelve words. A pang flashed through his heart as he saw his own life for five years mirrored up to him. He wondered if there were any more such sensitive souls who, isolated by education, had learned to despise their race. Perhaps the South held thousands such. This thought sickened him.

"You need not say more," he said, hastily; "I understand you; I pity and sympathize with you; but have you never thought yourself cowardly in not

fighting such thoughts? Suppose you had been born a mere dumb brute?"

"Ah, well, say rather had been born a man! I could have found something to do to better my kind and reconcile me to it. Perhaps if I had been a man, though black, I should have transferred my hate to the white race, *as you have done.*"

Harold started and turned pale under his sable skin, as if a thunderbolt had just struck him. This woman had just put into words what he had scarce dared put into thoughts.

"I—I!" he fairly gasped.

"Still I doubt if I should change places with you," the negress went on. "With you the shock of your blood came later in life, and it will not end till it consumes you body and soul. You can never get over it. An archangel cast down into hell is not likely to go about doing good deeds forever. That is where you made your great mistake in not marrying Mildred Markham."

Harold leaped from his seat this time.

"My God, you must be a sorceress! Tell me at once what you mean by that!"

It was a peculiarity of Kurtz's middle daughter that she never laughed. Sometimes a smile's shadow illuminated her eyes and mouth. It did so now.

"Hush! my mother upstairs will hear you. To begin with, I ransacked your trunk."

"You—"

"Oh, yes; I read most of your papers and all your letters when you were out yesterday. To be still more frank, *I purposely arranged this meeting* merely

to talk to perhaps the only human being—if we are human beings, indeed—in the universe who could understand me. I am convinced of that.”

Harold sat down amazed, yet enlightened. His first impulse was one of indignation, if not disgust; but then it occurred to him that nothing Emily might know concerning his history or plans would injure him or (from what he now divined) be disseminated. His next impulse was to say :

“ But do you not know when you ransacked my trunk you were a criminal ?”

“ What of that. I knew you and the consequences also.”

“ But your conscience—”

“ What ! Ah, that is the only immunity I have, Harold Bright—freedom from conscience. I have no moral nature. Nothing that I can commit, if it be voluntary, affects me in any way. Fortunately I am pretty well subdued and not rapacious. Besides, I should hate to be caught doing anything which would send me to *prison*.”

“ But how do you live ?” Harold mumbled, as if he had put the question to himself. “ How do you keep the secret ? Does not everybody despise you ?”

Again the negress half smiled.

“ No ; because I live in the world of books ; because I go about all day as if under the influence of some narcotic ; because I never show myself as you now see me, nor let myself be heard as you now hear ; because I do not give them an opportunity. Some day, if I get too much aroused, I shall try opium as a venture. The only reason I do not have to commit

crime, to steal, and even murder, is, because with a well-to-do parent there is no necessity for it."

Harold shuddered. He saw the curse of race in more glaring colors than he had ever thought possible. And yet this girl had said that she would not change places with him. He longed to learn what she knew about others ; he would have liked to know if she, like himself, was an exception.

Emily must have divined his thoughts.

" You are wondering," said the girl, " if I am but one of a hundred other such in Charleston, who carry around a white man's sensibilities in a black man's brain. Perhaps they keep their secret as well if not better than I do mine, but I think there are none among my acquaintances. It is because they are more blunted or less choice, or, perhaps, have been led to read less and look at things differently from what I have done."

When Harold arose and left the room, he did so with a sickening sensation, as of something gnawing at the vitals of conscience. His whole manhood arose in revolt at the thought which entered his brain, that the girl was right ; that, being a leper outside the pale, she was justified in freeing herself from Caucasian morality and its attendant obligations. At supper he ate little, because he was too miserable to eat. Abel Kurtz never was so jocose. He laughed and talked clear through the repast. On the back porch, that same evening, Harold repeated his former decision to bid his host good-by the next day. Abel made as if he would not hear of it. He laughed and said he thought Harold was in a mighty hurry.

“ ‘Pears to me a downright pity yo’ don’t settle down, Mr. Bright ; reckon you are most too modest with the women-folks. Now,” continued Abel, puffing at his pipe, “ I been a-thinking it all over, and jes’ come to the conclusion you’d make a right smart husband fer my eldest daughter. I reckon, Mr. Bright, she thinks a heap of you, and I reckon, perhaps, you think er heap of each other. Now,” continued the caterer, even more earnestly, “ yo’ ought to live in Charleston, you really ought, an’ if—”

It would be hard to say which of the two emotions Harold tolerated the most, amusement or anger. He rose from his chair, and going over close to his black host, shook hands with him gravely.

“ Keep your Basie, my dear friend. Let us not talk any more about it.”

“ Lord, you engaged ! I done told Betty I feared you were engaged.”

Abel’s face fell as he saw his hopes shattered into a million pieces ; but his was a buoyant nature. The grin came back as he released his hands and looked up to see his companion’s smile.

“ Yes,” answered Harold, absently ; “ I am engaged.”

And the next day it came to pass that Harold Bright had packed his few chattels together, and by noon was off into the distant rice-fields.

CHAPTER XXVII.

“ Ye men of Athens, hear me !”

JUST over the pine-trees of an interminable wood ascended the white curling smoke of a collection of fifty cabins. It could scarce be called an opening where they were, for the huge pines grew close to the sides of the rude habitations, and it was plain that with a clearing would come an absence of protection from the elements. In this part of the State it takes a good roof (these and such as these out of the question) to withstand the rays of the summer sun and the eternal rain-drops of winter. Three hundred souls existed in this place, but they were now away in the fields working for their weekly pittance of a peck of corn, a few slices of bacon, and a jug of molasses. It rarely varies, this stipend. Its recipients are not likely to squander away their substance in riotous living.

Albeit not all away, for a few aged negresses moved busily inside the huts, and a bevy of black pickaninnies gambolled unmeaningly in the sunshine. It was now November, and there were few enough dry days in which to play out-of-doors.

Standing in the shadow of the trees, with the light of afternoon flickering fitfully through the swaying pines, was the solitary figure of Harold on horseback. He had drawn up from the narrow roadside without

making the slightest noise, and stood stock-still while contemplating the group. If one could read the thoughts that stirred behind the black mask he wore !

The rider's horse gnawed at the branches of an adjacent shrub. The little black children played on.

“ What if I was once like that ? ” Perhaps Harold's thoughts ran like this : “ Yes ; why ask ? I was once like that. What crime should I not commit in taking one of these tiny wretches away from his play and thrusting him into the fetters of a civilization false to him, false to everybody to whom it owes a being. If I murdered him, it would be a trifle compared to this deed. How he and his little playmates wallow in their self-satisfaction ! All the pleasures and passions, all the desires and miseries, all the vanities and tumults—what will he ever tell of these ? Mind is closed to him unless the humanitarian—his ten times murderer—wrests from him his bliss and gives him in return the demon of self-consciousness. We are satisfied in our ignorance, and they give us a new set of susceptibilities, that the torture of our ignominy may be more exquisitely felt. They hand us our certificate of freedom and then coolly put us in irons. Oh, yes ; as for me, I can afford to look down upon these little brutes. Alas ! nobody is likely to experiment with *them*. ”

As for him, Harold Bright, *déclassée, misérable, leper* ; as for him, not now despondent, uneasy, cowering, but fast growing into a vindictive—as for him (to leave this train of musing), he alighted from his horse, and deliberately walking to the nearest cabin, knocked on the door.

It was answered by an old and wizened black woman, who gave him welcome.

Harold passed two nights in this rude settlement, among the most primitive of his own race he had ever seen or known. They all felt that he was superior to them, but if they had been asked they could hardly have told why. The negro of the rice-fields has but two standards of social excellence, white and black. He was black, as black as they. He went into the fields and saw them work from dawn almost until it was too dark to see, and then Harold mounted his horse and went away again. The mere sight of him might have harmed these people, if they were not so trodden down into the sink of solitude and isolation from the world. As it was, it was merely an epoch in their lives, to be talked about by them for many a long day afterward.

The city of Columbia lay fifteen miles away, and having started at noon, he reached that city, which he had left three days previously, a little before night-fall. Harold's stay in the little gloomy capital had been nearly a repetition of the days he had spent in Charleston, save that the society pleased him slightly more. Here he found doctors, lawyers, and even journalists of his own race. Romulus Sleight, a mulatto physician, with a fair practice and a reputation for skill, was his host during his stay at Columbia. But Harold fancied, as he now rode along, that even he, successful as he was, like the others, tried to hide his discontent in politics. It was hate of the white man that animated him, too. Sleight's own brother had been shot down by a white mob, and he himself had

received more "warnings" than he could count on his finger-ends.

"They tell me not to interfere and I shall be let alone, but I have a right to do it, and I will exercise the right till they hang me up and riddle me, too. Simply because I ain't white is no reason why I can't have my rights."

That was the way he reasoned. He was like a horde more who were to pay the penalty for this singularly misguided way of thinking.

Now the shadows were sinking deep over all as Harold re-entered the city. He thought the streets looked unnaturally dark as he wended his way through them. It occurred to him that the street lamps had not yet been lit. He had been several days in the city, but it seemed to him that he had never noticed it so quiet at this hour. There was absolutely no soul upon the streets. The trot of his horse was the only sound that struck his ear, even as he traversed the city's main thoroughfare. Strange, he thought. Harold headed the animal down the inclined avenue leading to the dwelling of the doctor with a feeling of mistrust. His strange fears and presentiments were not altogether groundless.

Half-way down the thoroughfare, a lad he had often remarked about the house of Romulus Sleight came dashing along the sidewalk to meet him, crying to Harold as he did so to stop. Harold drew in his rein, and in the calmest manner he could assume asked what was the matter.

"Doctor Sleight—Bob—turn back to de lef'!"

gasped the young negro, excitedly. "White man's mob—I'm sent to tell you."

"*A mob!*"

Like a flash his horse was wheeled round, so that the animal fairly reared on its hind quarters.

"Rape—He never done it—at home all evenin'. Doctor Sleight wants you to prove—"

Harold caught these words from the excited black youth as his animal whirled him to the north end of the town.

Strange noises began to be born on the night breeze. Harold thought he saw the flashes of many torches. He urged his steed faster. Soon he distinguished shouts. Suddenly, without a moment's warning, he found himself whirled into a great opening packed with people. The hush of death was upon them. He saw a circle formed, lit up with flaring torches held by a number of white men. Three of them held what proved to be a well-dressed young negro, who was shivering and shaking and making the most frantic gesticulations. His collar had been torn off and a fourth white man was adjusting a long piece of hempen rope. This had been drawn about the unfortunate man's neck, who struggled like a demon. The crowd seemed to be absorbed in this proceeding. Every eye in this vast assemblage, in which whites and blacks were about evenly divided, was straining itself to see. When the fatal noose had been adjusted a mighty yell arose. Above all other voices was heard that of Sleight, the mulatto doctor. He shrieked aloud that his son was innocent; he

swore ; he cursed the would-be murderers ; he cried about for vengeance until a powerful man, with a brown, stubby beard, grabbed him from behind and choked him into silence. Then two others gagged the boy, all the while pointing ominous-looking shot-guns and revolvers at those blacks who offered any disposition to rescue their friends.

“ G—d— you, hush your mouth ! Run him up, boys, the marshal’s coming ! Run him up !”

The powerful man with the stubby beard now ran to and fro.

“ Clear the circle ! Move back ! Every man move back ! Make a space for the boys ! We’ll teach these ————— to attack our woman.”

The crowd gave vent to a horrible, responsive yell. The negroes on the outskirts looked on, helplessly fascinated.

“ Hey there, Tim ! What in Christ’s name are yo’ waitin’ for ? String him up, why don’t yo’ string him ?”

A black solitary figure sprang like an apparition into the midst of the mob. Harold’s eyes gleamed fire, like one inspired. His voice rang out like a trumpet.

“ Men of Columbia,” he thundered, “ stop ! In the name of God and justice release that man. He is innocent—I swear it and can prove it.”

The arms of the men holding Robert Sleight fell to their sides as if paralyzed. The crowd looked at one another as if in a dream. The tongues of the ring-leaders clove to the roofs of their mouths. Several were frozen with superstitious fright. When had

such a negro as this been seen or heard of before. Away—away ! this was no negro !

“ Men of Columbia,” the voice rang out once more, “ I stand ready to answer for that black boy’s innocence with my own life ! Bind me now and hang me instead if you find I lie to you. I can call twenty witnesses to prove that he was with me on the night it is charged he did this heinous crime.”

“ Who the hell is this ?” gasped the chief leader, in a dazed sort of a way. “ See here, young fellow ; yo’ ain’t no nigger.”

“ No,” murmured fifty voices in unison ; “ he ain’t no nigger.”

But the spirit of vengeance seemed to have flickered out of the crowd. They marvelled, and they had quit clamoring for blood.

The big man made a movement toward Harold. Another held a blazing torch before his face.

“ So help me Christ, who are you ?”

A score of deadly weapons menaced the intrepid black.

“ Will you hear me ?” he began, just as the man who questioned reached out his powerful palm and slapped him violently in the face. A tremor frightful to see ran the length of Harold’s body.

At the same instant the mayor of the city and a party of men burst through the crowd. In the party was the sheriff. The latter was attired in his shirt and trousers only.

“ Disperse ! disperse !” he shouted. “ Every man of you disperse or suffer the consequences ! The man that played me this trick will have to answer to

the law. I know you, Joe Troup, and you, too, Hank Jackson. If you go away peaceably, maybe this'll be the last of it."

The crowd thinned out as by magic. A few negroes knocked on the head by the butt end of a few revolvers was all the damage done.

"Sold again, by G—!" called out the powerful man, and laughed a coarse laugh.

A lot of other citizens who had come up were all that were left.

"I am sorry this has occurred," said one of them, whose silvery hair was cut short and who wore glasses.

The man who had come so near to death was busy ungagging his father. Harold seemed to have vanished into thin air. It is strange how quickly a crowd can disperse.

"Yes, I, too, am grieved." The last speaker was about thirty years old, and spoke with a Northern accent. "It begins to look as though the old times had come back, doesn't it?"

"How long have you been here, Thorpe?"

"Eleven years."

"Um! then this has only occurred three times in that period. You know as well as I do why the old Klan feeling has broke out again. It won't be long before the Northerners will begin packing their trunks to go home."

"Or, worse than that, an army of five thousand United States troops quartered upon us. I wonder if this is likely to occur again soon. I don't believe the boy was guilty."

"Neither do I. Henry Jones trumped up the

charge because the nigger Sleight brought about his defeat when he ran for sheriff."

"That's it, eh? Well, I wish this would not get to the ears of the North, but that is impossible."

"Ah, Mr. Dixon, it isn't that. It is the way in which it reaches the ear of the North. Why those d—d correspondents will garble columns of an incident, which the people now are sorry for, and which, you see, has turned out harmless."

"You are right; but the correspondents say they must do their duty; besides, if it wasn't they, it would be somebody else. I'm mighty sorry it occurred, anyway."

Each of these gentlemen represented the better element of the city. They thought most of what the North would say. It was uppermost in the mind of this class.

The local newsdealer had his hands full in telegraphing for supplies. These little affairs, whether they had a fatal termination or not, were bread in the mouth of this personage. By the sensational sheet of the metropolis the South gauged the North's opinion of it.

The correspondents were at a loss to find Harold. It seemed as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up.

Indeed, the black did little more than bid adieu to the doctor, his host, and acknowledge the gratitude showered upon him. Harold took the next train travelling to westward. Nothing more was needed. *A slap in the face*, administered by a white man! It was the first time he had ever been smitten.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"The determination to eliminate the negro as a political and social factor is complete. It is not disguised, and there is neither equivocation nor subterfuge. While there are none who would restore the African to slavery, there are few who believe him fit for freedom."

CALHOUN BRADY was indisputably one of the foremost men of the South. His matchless eloquence and undoubted sincerity won him a hearing from the North at a time when men were but little disposed to listen, when the memory of the Great Conflict, as it was called, still rankled hotly in their breasts. His name itself had come to be regarded as a synonym for the "New South"—a South of commerce, of industries, of manufacture. Under this new *régime*, it was plain that some pronounced character must stand forth as a type of what was to follow. Calhoun Brady, Esq., was a *silhouette* among outlines. His intellect was not so broad as long, not so distinctive as it was representative. Men admired his temerity. They called his philosophy courage. He was the first to come forward and say, "*I forget.*" It was a hard sentence, but Calhoun Brady mastered it and repeated it upon every occasion that offered itself. When the indignities and insults of the period of Reconstruction were over, he felt himself animated by a thoroughly native spirit. He said: "I may as well put senti-

ment in my pocket. Now for business." He saw that sentiment was not going to rehabilitate the South, to build its mills and restore its mines and plantations. His chest swayed, his right arm gesticulated, and his voice rang clear as a clarion, and all the people, his neighbors, said after him :

" It is just as well to put sentiment in our pockets. Now we will proceed to business."

Never was nation so shattered and demoralized ; never did any country recuperate its fortunes more speedily. People looked at Calhoun Brady, especially the croakers and huggers of sectionalism, and wondered if he were not, after all, half right. Some, indeed, there were who saw something higher in the motives for which their fathers and brothers fought and died, and said he was the South's greatest enemy. Others pointed to the mill chimneys, the prosperous cities, and busy forges, and said he was her best friend. It is a paradox. They were both right.

But underneath all this material prosperity men at the North claimed that the treacherous embers of race hatred smouldered, capable in a moment of being fanned into a terrible flame.

Above all things, Harold desired to see this great man and talk with him. Through him he knew he could get at the heart of the Southerner, for this man was never equivocal ; he was not afraid of utterance. Calhoun Brady was not two-faced. He prided himself on his perfect candor and catholicity. He received at diverse times many negroes in his house, and treated them with the utmost consideration. But he saw at once that Harold was cast in a different intel-

lectual mould from ordinary negroes. His fame, too, had preceded him. Thus in every respect Bright's visit to the sage was auspicious.

"To see you, sir," began Harold, "is the motive of my visit to this city. I wish to ask you something. Can I hope that you will meet me half-way?"

The other smiled, not unkindly.

"You may," he replied, slowly; "but first let me see if I can't divine all your questions."

Calhoun Brady then bit the end off a cigar, lazily lit it, placed the match carefully in a receptacle, and continued:

"You are a negro brought up and educated in a foreign land, unaware of the existence of race problems and race oppression, or even of race itself. You come to this country, you remain here—I believe five years, is it not?—and finding yourself irrevocably classed with six millions instead of seventy millions, or the whole social body, you take up arms at once, not for yourself, but in defence of the six millions who are ostracised. You come to me just now, if I am not mistaken, as a plaintiff nursing a wrong, expect to ask and be answered. I have too good an opinion of your intelligence and acquirements not to plan a different course for us both. We shall reverse your intended method. I shall—for the first time in my life, I reckon—state the case of the white man before a colored jury, because," he added, "I suppose you will print this in your newspaper."

"Let us go back to the beginning and see how your ideas of the facts tally with mine.

"Thousands of your ancestors were captured on

the African coast by their own brethren, sold into slavery, and subsequently transferred to this country. Other countries would not have them. England would not receive them at any price, Spain and Portugal had outgrown them, Brittany murdered them as fast as they were smuggled on her coast ; but this was a new country, a vast tract which needed cultivation and settlement. Immigrants would not come out quick enough, so serfdom was absolutely demanded, as in all rudimentary states—Greece, Rome, Russia, for example. The primary thing to be done, apparently, was to chain the Indians and put them to work ; but the Indian, being of a different species from the African, would not work ; indeed, he would cheerfully dash his brains out against a tree-trunk first. The captured Indian was useless, the captured African was valuable. The slave trade prospered, and in turn was abolished ; the country was emancipated from sterility both in population and soil, but still the slaves remained. An evil unforeseen but inevitable transpires. The slaves accumulate after the need for them has past. They are of a separate color and habit, and can never, like the slaves of Rome and Russia, blend with the dominant class.

“ Slavery happens to be one of those evils the intensity of which is best seen at a distance. Its full dread form is then best appreciated. At any rate, the slaves were men, and one part of the country interferes and drags master and man apart. The slave was a sore in the master’s vital part. It kept him from that inestimable boon, self-dependence. A race of effeminate was imminent. A man counted not

his brain, his hands, his gifts, but his slaves. The South sees all this clearly enough now. The North acted the physician's part and cut away the sore, and the country after a period of sanative quiescence sprang to its feet, and what do you see? Why, look at our mills, our factories, our newspapers; look at our homes; and, in short, our progress in every department of social, industrial, and literary life."

Calhoun Brady arose as he said this, smiling and self-satisfied. He puffed a little at his cigar.

"Now for your questions. First, you are going to ask me if I approve of the suffrage of the ex-slave being trampled upon—a suffrage that was given him by order of the national Congress and embodied in an imperishable Constitution. Why, you ask, is the black man cheated of his vote? You ask me to admit that, if he votes, that vote is never counted when there is any danger of his securing a majority. Well, Bright, suppose I admit it, what then? A man whose house is burning down and who throws his chattels out of the window naturally runs a risk of breakage. The Southern people expect to break something in order to save their homes and families. 'But the Constitution!' you say. Exactly; but the Constitution is not godlier or greater than our fire-sides. The Constitution was framed to secure the greatest good to the greatest number. We are the greatest number. It aims to secure fairness and equity to all. Then this is a peculiar case; for if you give the minority their *rights* you irretrievably damn the majority."

Harold had been listening intently and with patience. He now interrupted by asking :

“ Mr. Brady, may I suggest wherein lies the deep damnation of fairness ? ”

Mr. Brady hesitated.

“ If you were a Southern nigger,” he said, frankly. “ I should not answer you ; but if my answer wounds your feelings, they are wounded for a third person. First, then, because the negro is a curse to us. In its own sphere your race is all right, but not among ours. To be sure, we brought the slave here, or our fore-fathers did, and you say we have got to provide for his descendants. Perhaps we are being justly punished. But you are above your race mentally. Try and look at the case fairly from a Caucasian standpoint. Does our having to provide for you—supposing that you *were* one—mean that we shall take you into the bosom of our family ; does it even mean that we shall share with you an equal privilege in that glorious citizenship which took centuries of civilization to establish—you who but yesterday were savages and may at any moment *relapse* into barbarism ? Citizenship cannot be held too lightly ; let us see if you are competent to share that citizenship. Could you sustain yourself for one moment in competition with any one of the thirty odd nationalities which already inhabit this country ? We set apart Liberia for you, did we not ? and the moment the white man withdrew his arm your vaunted structure fell away, and Liberia, which in the hands of any other race would have been a success, is now little more than a desert. You yourself are a proof of what is possible

to do for the race individually, but—I speak plainly—do you think my wife and children would not shrink from you as a companion and intimate, with *all* your education and accomplishments? They would do it instinctively, just as the horse shrinks from contact with the camel. You are, to speak more plainly still, a marvellous piece of art or of mechanism. Nature furnished the rough clay and man has moulded and modelled you—”

“ I did not come here to be insulted, Mr. Brady,” said Harold, hotly.

A cold chill was running down his spine as the other spoke.

“ There, excuse me, Bright. I have no wish to offend your feelings in the least. If I speak too plainly, it is with the laudable desire of convincing you that your race is not like yourself—that you are an *exception*. Consider the difficulty in the process of refining six million blacks from birth, and then consider that even so refined we should still shrink from contact with them as comrades, and how much more as bedfellows. Suppose we permitted your race—ignorant, bestial, and headstrong—to gain political predominance. Suppose you elected a negro governor and legislature of Mississippi or South Carolina (and we once attempted the experiment), what white man would obey their laws? You know the white man better than that. What then? Anarchy would ensue—a total disrespect on the part of the Caucasian population for law and order, as proceeding from constitutionally qualified officers. There would have to be a government for the whites as well as for the

blacks. This truth remains at the bottom of all the race differences in the South ; the two races *can* not assimilate socially and *will* not cohere politically.

“ Why, even Nature, the all-wise mother, has proclaimed against amalgamation. Mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, and—*stop!*—there Nature has set her seal. ‘ Thus far,’ says Nature, ‘ shalt thou go and no farther.’ An octoroon and a white are powerless to perpetuate the breed of a hybrid race. If the white man and black man must live side by side, it must be as a separate and distinct race.

“ Whatever we do that smacks of injustice to Northern eyes is done for the best. The North removed the tumor on the civilization of the South, but left the scarred scab still among us. That is poor surgery, if good politics. If I might make a joke on so grave a subject, I should be inclined to wonder why the North did not do as every good surgeon does, and would have done, place so interesting a specimen in his Cabinet. But no ; the Republican Party is too shrewd for that. Votes, but no offices. They have changed professions since the war, and it is their opponents who have become the healers.

“ But we loved you ; there was a time when the negro was dear to us. We alone understand your race.”

“ Yes,” broke in Harold, bitterly ; “ you loved us as you loved your dog ; you loved us as an animal ; but when we arose and showed that we were men—”

“ Exactly. Our love turned to disgust. Well, can you, who may regard history impartially, wonder at it ? It is impossible that we can ever *hate* the negro.

The great mistake was in insisting that he should be placed on a level with us."

"Well, the insistence was successful," said the other.

"Then your race had better keep its mouth tightly closed. It has only now to thank its friends and the eternal law of compensation. The two races can never assimilate nor can you ever get us to regard you as we regard ourselves. It is no use your trying, Bright, to agitate your race in this country. The key-note of all your talk and writings is white recognition, and that you will never get as long as the sky is blue above us and Almighty God fashions animals and men after their kind."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Education will ultimately render a collision between the races inevitable."—INGALLS.

AFTER Calhoun Brady's revelations it appeared very much, then, as if the future, as he had mapped it out, were a huge blank for Harold. It was only after he left Brady's presence that the full significance of what he had just heard burst upon him. He felt that he had heard and seen enough to convince him that any further writing and teaching was hypocrisy, rank and dangerous.

It is true, he had been partially conscious of this truth for months, but he had hardly expected it to be preached as the doctrine of the white man. Harold was too acute and conscientious not to see the meanness and pettiness of attempting to combat this doctrine with mere words. He observed, with a very active eye, the horde of negro preachers and politicians who thus preyed upon the credulity of his race, and despised them all.

If he had stopped here all might yet have been well ; but he began to despise himself. The germ of misery he had borne in his soul for five dreary years took root and branch, and a great Upas-tree of despair seemed to extend its noisome foliage over his whole life. He lay awake on his bed conning over what he

had heard and proving the truth of every word which had been uttered respecting himself.

He thought of Emily Kurtz with a shudder. He saw himself very near that fate, very near indeed. The only thing that separated him from such a life of morbid desolation was his manhood. He felt that he had the use of his right arm. *Harold could hate to a purpose.*

CHAPTER XXX.

“For it is, in truth, more merciful to extirpate a hundred thousand beings at once, and to fill the void with a well-governed population, than to misgovern millions through a long succession of generations.”—*On Sir William Temple.*

ON a clear, bright morning early in November the newsboys were shouting about in the New York streets like mad. The train on which Harold was borne back to the metropolis had barely shot under the depot arches before a train-boy came headlong through the car with an armful of “extras.” Few of the passengers, busy as they were in arranging their exits, could help smiling at the lad’s enthusiasm—the cry of “extra” was to them so thoroughly metropolitan. Some of them purchased papers. Harold was engaged in strapping his valise when the vendor stopped in front of him.

“I guess *you* want a paper, don’t you?” he said, half grinning—“all about the colored massacre down South.”

The other passengers were filing out of the car. Only one of them turned back and laughed. Harold hastily bought a paper. It was a copy of the *Sun*. In bold, black letters the head-lines started thus :

FIFTY NEGROES KILLED.

A Deliberate Uprising of Whites in South Carolina.

HORRIBLE SCENES OF BLOODSHED.

GENERAL WADE HAMILTON VAINLY APPEALS TO THE MOB.

THREE WHITE MEN MORTALLY WOUNDED.

The subsequent account was most meagre, but it bore little evidence of exaggeration. Extras were being issued rapidly. At the conclusion of the heavily leaded lines was this sentence :

“Another extra of the *Sun*, giving the complete particulars of the massacre, will be ready at 9.30 a.m.”

After the first shock Harold read the lines with a spasm, not of horror, not of indignation, but of triumph. His blood grew rapidly on fire. His eyes were bloodshot, and he left the train like a drunken man.

* * * * *

An hour later he burst into L'Heureux's office.

“Now, now!” he exclaimed. “What are you going to do now?”

L'Heureux was busy reading the account of the massacre. All the morning papers were spread in confusion before him. He looked up astonished.

“How d'ye do, Bright,” he said, somewhat coldly; but the other refused his hand.

“Tell me, L'Heureux, what you are going to do,” he repeated.

“I have wired to a friend at Columbia to send me

all the particulars. You see, Bright, we want the truth first. I ought to get an answer within an hour. I shall then send a message to the President, demanding that the section be put immediately under martial law, and that a million colored citizens at the North rely upon him to visit justice upon the murderers. What more *can* be done?"

The other listened impatiently.

"Aren't you going to call a mass-meeting?"

"What for? It will only incite additional violence. But stay, I'll see Bartlett at once and arrange a meeting of sympathy on the day of the funeral."

"And that is all?" returned Harold, hotly. "Incite additional violence! We want it—we want violence. Vengeance is what we want and what *we* will have. Fifty men have been shot down for no other reason than their color. We will have a hundred of their lives as a penalty. They are trying to exterminate us by the shot-gun! You are a fool, L'Heureux, if you don't see that. 'The shot-gun is the only solution of the nigger problem.' A white man told me that. And you fear violence—*you*!"

"You are too excited to be rational, Bright," was the other's only comment.

"Rational or not, I shall do my best to avenge this horror. You can go your path, I shall go mine. It is no use depending on the white man. Why, look here!" Harold fairly shrieked; "look—look at the paper—the Governor has refused to have the troops remain out. Blood for blood. *Blood for blood*, do you hear me?"

And he kept his word.

It was Thursday. The low studded ceiling of the mighty hall seemed to thrill and threaten under the intensity of the cries. Good, harmless cheering was left to less earnest assemblages than this—this ocean of black faces. The negroes were too excited to merely *cheer* the speakers. The platform was crowded with black honorables, lawyers, doctors, and preachers. Speaker after speaker rose and added fuel to the fire. The hot African rejected calmness. There were no canny souls to come forward and plead extenuating circumstances or counsel moderation. If such a one had come forward now, he would have been fortunate in not being torn limb from limb, so passionate had grown the mob.

Fifty fathers and brothers, even mothers and sisters, had been foully murdered! The white murderers stalked untouched over their graves! The black man had no rights, not even to turn when trodden upon! Revenge on the White Pest!

Such was the substance of the evening's anarchy. All at once a semi-hush fell on the vast throng, and the tall, active figure of Harold Bright stepped beside the chairman.

His eyes were frightfully bloodshot and his cheeks were sunken. Nothing in face or manner suggested the Harold who had stepped on these shores five years before. His fingers had a habit of clutching convulsively at the desk before him.

“Brother-slaves!” were his first words. This was the signal for the mob to go mad. They shrieked and gesticulated, each man for himself. Three thousand

sets of grinning teeth glistened while the tumult raged. Outside the hall a captain of police asked another captain of police whether it would not be wise to clear the hall.

“Nonsense,” said his fellow-officer, laughing ; “the niggers aren’t going to do anything but yell. They think it’s a regular cake-walk.”

Harold Bright continued his speech. It was he who had called the meeting, as chairman of the Afro-American Citizens’ Committee. The mob hung on his lips.

“We have been passive—so passive ; we have been obedient ; we have obeyed all the laws the white man has chosen to make for us ; we have been patient ; we have been long-suffering and forgiving—have we not, fellow-slaves ?”

“Hear, hear !” thundered the sable mass.

“But we have been patient, I fear, too long. We have been passive too long. Now, now is the time for *vengeance !*”

It was at this point that fifty of the most ferocious negroes suddenly left the hall.

The swaying figure on the platform did not pause.

“Hate !” “Revenge !” “The shot-gun and the torch !” were some of the words which rose above the tumult.

“Seven millions of wronged souls cry from the blood of their fathers and brothers for their rights ! White men, you can’t get rid of us ! We will be with you always—hear that !”

* * * * *

Another negro orator arose. Five sentences had

been uttered, when a flushed mulatto face crushed his way in from the rear of the rostrum and then stopped, wedged in by the mass. It was L'Heureux. He hastily scribbled on a piece of paper, with his hands held high in air.

"Pass that on to Mr. Bright," he said, hoarsely. On it was written:

"The police have orders to clear the hall. Warrants are out for your arrest. You must fly at once.

"L'HEUREUX."

* * * * *

In less than an hour it was known from the Battery to Harlem that twenty houses owned by Southerners had been ruthlessly fired and five citizens murdered in their beds.

CHAPTER XXXI.

“The destruction of error by the potency of truth.”—*Platform Anti-Slavery Congress*, 1833.

THE newspapers the next morning told the story with varied comment. The whole town was in a ferment of excitement.

Men went down to their offices armed, and negro employés in banks, stores, and warehouses were regarded with horror and suspicion. Hundreds were discharged on the spot, and made no attempt to seek elsewhere for employment.

BLACK ANARCHY RAMPANT !

So ran the *Herald's* head-lines :

A Night of Horror Unsurpassed in the City's History.

FIRE, MURDER, AND PILLAGE.

FIVE HONORED CITIZENS MASSACRED.

Full Account of What Transpired at the Cooper Union Meeting.

BRIGHT, THE NEGRO ANARCHIST, SAID TO HAVE ESCAPED.

*While All is Quiet at Columbia,
there are Uprisings in Other Cities.*

This told the effect on the public mind. This was on Friday morning. On Saturday the whole affair was reviewed *ad infinitum* in leaders by the newspapers.

“The long-expected has happened,” said the *Sun*. . . . “We have long called attention to the growing vindictiveness of the Northern negro population, and it is generally understood that the authorities were properly warned beforehand of the danger of such a meeting as was held in Cooper Union last Thursday night. The wealth and prominence of the citizens who were foully assassinated enhances the horror of the occurrence. . . . But the question that will continue to be asked is, why Northern negroes, who are treated among us with almost fraternal consideration, should turn to murder and pillage, a course which the negro of the South shrank from doing? Is it that they have grown stronger and fiercer from close and friendly contact with white men? . . . In Africa, travellers tell us, the negro is savage and bloodthirsty. During his period of American slavery he was known to be docile to a marked degree. Is it possible that he is now reverting to his original repressed characteristics?”

“It is idle,” observed the *Tribune*, “for the authorities to incarcerate four hundred and fifty of our colored population, under the belief that they have removed all source of further violence. . . . No one can loathe the frightful crimes that were committed in this city Thursday night more than does the *Tribune*; but it must not be forgotten that the colored race has been goaded and maddened into reprisal. . . . After all has been said about the estimable characters of the

dead men, the latter certainly laid themselves open to violence by their own actions. Three of them publicly refused, in an interview with different members of the Southern Society, and printed in the *Herald* on the morning of the Cooper Union meeting, to condemn the South Carolina assassins. . . . Society is just beginning to reap a fearful harvest out of its apathy to the question of black men's rights."

The *World* said : " Following close upon the wholesale massacre in the South, the horror of the occurrence is accentuated. It is impossible that its startling significance can be lost. . . . The *World* has from time to time printed interviews with leaders of Southern sentiment, in which such an outbreak was foreshadowed. . . . Several years ago, it will be remembered, the chiefs of the Republican Party urged the negroes to the dagger and torch. Had any portion of the blacks of the South followed this advice, they would have been exterminated to a man. The unity of antagonism there is so strong that the white populace would have arisen and hewn them down without mercy. . . . But at the North the black assassin does not seriously endanger or compromise his race. He himself is in no more danger of communistic violence than the Italian, Pole, or Chinese criminal. Consequently the leaders and promoters of Thursday night's horror chose their ground well. . . . A handful of negroes have merely been discharged from their employment, and the populace remarks to itself, 'I told you so.' "

The foreign editors viewed the episode with mingled excitement and self-gratulation. " Long ex-

pected" and "America is reaping the fruits of her apathy" was the gist of their criticisms.

"Perhaps the terrible occurrences at New York and in South Carolina," remarked the *Times*, "will have the effect of opening the eyes of the Americans to the gravity of the race question. *Laissez-faire* has been their motto too long in this matter. If it should prompt Congress to immediate action, the five honored citizens of New York who were so foully murdered will not have died in vain."

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ But when Convention sent his handiwork,
Pens, tongues, feet, hands combined in wild uproar.”

—BYRON.

DID public opinion, so long and lazily gathering itself together, turn its eye away from all other questions and look this in the face?

Perhaps. It was strange—“ damnably strange,” many said—that people had never come to consider this an important issue before. You are quite right, rings of national politicians *had* agitated it among themselves, and statesmen *had* written about it in fashionable reviews.

But all the efforts of the political tricksters only succeeded in raising an eccentric cloud of dust, which pretty effectually blinded the eyes of the masses, who were to do the business in their own way.

And as for the learned statesmen, why, they wrote for fashionable reviews, for which the editors of these fashionable reviews paid—well, not unfashionable checks. That was the end of it.

Indeed, for a time it looked as if the black blot on the national escutcheon were not to be removed, but, instead, the whole thing were to be circumlocutorily dodged.

For many weeks after the disappearance of Harold

Bright, and after the excitement born of the tragedy had somewhat subsided, solutions of the problem were in order.

Solving! Solving! At the Fifth Avenue clubs, at the saloons in West Broadway the perpetual solving went on. It seemed in many cases as if it were the hopeless task of trying to make black *white*, and white *black*. As if such a thing could ever be done! Yet for a time it was quite *à la mode*.

“But,” cried the child, in the old fairy tale, “HE HASN’T ANYTHING ON!”

The child may have been particularly dull—a very ordinary child—indeed, a remarkably stupid child, but nonetheless on that account entitled to the credit of making a highly important discovery. Who knows what might have happened if all had continued to see people gallop about naked, because they were told it was the proper thing to pretend to be clothed?

When men’s powers of reasoning have become addled with syllogisms, they reason largely from a formula set by knaves.

And so the Child whose vision was perfectly simple came to set them right and tell the country that it was all wrong, that it was being hoodwinked, that *He* had nothing on, in fact. That the attributes and power and virtues with which he was popularly invested were all imaginary, hypothetical, and supposititious.

“There is no question about it,” said the Child (who represented a very obscure Congressional district, by the way), “he is absolutely bare. Away with deceit. *He has nothing on.*”

Along the well-trod path that led around the mere at Dubersly and over the wooded summit of the tiny hill strode a familiar figure. The rays of the dying sun threw his port into bold relief. A little stouter, perhaps, but with the same brow. Slightly aged, but erect. As the sun sunk into its own radiant revery, the great statesman was pondering over the contents of a letter which ran in this wise :

“ SIR : This, the last human epistle my hand shall ever pen, I address to you, who are the cause of my consciousness and the murderer of my happiness. Not from your lips, but from the world’s, have I learned the history of Inigo Bright’s Experiment ; and it is on this paper and with this pen that I purpose to record its irrevocable *finale*. The hate and horror with which I regard you is too intense for me to express in mere words or to cause me to attempt vain deeds. I have often thought that if I could crush you in my palm I should be supremely content to follow you to your grave. But enough of this. You, the idol of your fellows, the darling of the nation, can afford, no doubt, to be complacent over your exploit. I understand from a copy of the *Times*, which I found here in Cairo, that you ‘threw me up when you found me headstrong.’ You washed your hands of the affair when you found that you could not mould mind as well as body. That trenches largely on God’s province. Very good. I do not seek to know your motives. I shall be generous enough, however, to confide in you something that will, doubtless, interest you. Perhaps you believed

me dead ere this: Did you think that I had died by my own hand? I love life too well. Suffering has made me a philosopher, which your education failed to do.

“ To-morrow is my birthday. I shall be twenty-six years old. What a capital farce my life has been! Some modern Ovid ought to make his fortune transposing a new and greater metamorphoses of mortals, with my portrait as a frontispiece !

I have just had a glass of the best brandy in Cairo, I enjoy looking at my black hand trace these words. None other as black as I in Egypt could do that!

O! I am going to live from tomorrow on! In a few hours I shall

be on my path, I trust,
to the West Coast. . . .

Do you see this blot?
It is nothing! — It is
myself!!! A careful
community will erase it,
n'est-ce pas? I am
riser, though — I
esaporate! Ha! Ha!

(Here the handwriting of this communication grows exceedingly obscure.)

“ Well, I have no grudge against you. I shall forget you to-morrow. I am going to do what my brutal fathers . . . I call them brutal to-day, to-morrow I shall approve . . . ” (The rest of the letter was illegible.)

At the bottom of the leaf was the following, evidently cut with a penknife from a copy of Tennyson’s Poems. Several lines were ingeniously erased :

“ There the passions, cramped no longer, shall have scope and breathing space,
I will take some savage woman: she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive and they shall
run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, twirl their lances in the sun ;
Whistle back the parrot's call and leap the rainbow of the
brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books.

* * * * *

For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, as I go."

THE END.

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